

**The Records of a City: A Guide
to the Baltimore City Archives**

Edited by William G. LeFurgy

**City of Baltimore, Department of Legislative Reference,
City Archives and Records Management Office
Baltimore
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Preface

Since reorganization of the Baltimore City Archives began in 1978, we have committed ourselves to elevate the public's awareness of the great wealth of knowledge contained in the city's historical records. The Records of a City: A Guide to the Baltimore City Archives represents a major step toward this goal. After five years of work, we are pleased to offer this guide to everyone who has an interest in the history of Baltimore.

This volume could not have been written without support for our efforts from Mayor William Donald Schaefer and the City of Baltimore. In an era when municipal archives are a distinct rarity, Baltimore has had the wisdom and foresight to provide for its historical records. As a result, Baltimore is one of the best documented localities in the nation, a factor that will insure long remembrance of the city's past. Baltimore's "urban renaissance" and other accomplishments for which the municipality is noted are now assured of a prominent place in history.

Over the past six years, many people have contributed to the preparation of this guide. A large measure of credit has to go to Richard J. Cox, who served as City Archivist and Records Management Officer from 1978 to mid-1983. It was his vision and commitment to quality that transformed this program into the vital operation it is today. Richard was also the first person to begin compiling and editing information for the guide. Anne S.K. Turkos and Cynthia H. Requardt put in many hours arranging and describing records, and Susan Wertheimer David contributed to the cataloging of the mayor and city council records. Karen Freeberger did an excellent job deciphering our handwritings and typing the manuscript. Without the unstinting efforts of all these people, this project never would have seen the light of day.

A special note of thanks goes to the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC), which funded two grants for the archives. These grants allowed us to hire two archivists to survey and catalog large quantities of historical records. In addition to providing the money to make good intentions a reality, NHPRC also supplied valuable guidance.

William G. LeFurgy

Introduction

American Municipal Records

Neglect has long characterized the condition of municipal and local government records. Richard J. Cox in his 1983 study of local government records situations in different states across the nation found recurring problems in the use, storage, and availability of materials.¹ This is a serious problem because these records are essential sources for interpreting the history of people, localities, and the nation as a whole. Awareness of the need to preserve local government records has risen significantly within the last few years among archivists, historians, and local officials, but a great deal of effort is necessary to correct decades of dereliction.

While the Baltimore City Archives program is somewhat removed from perfection, substantial effort has been put forward since 1978 to preserve and make available the historical records of the city's government. This guide - one of only a handful devoted to the records of an American municipality - represents the culmination of our work through September 1983. Despite the relatively large quantity of historical records described here, work has only just begun. And although the primary purpose of the guide is to advertise our holdings, we also hope that this publication will contribute to improvement of the records situation of other localities in the United States.

History of the Baltimore City Archives

Baltimore was founded in 1729 and grew slowly during its first fifty years. Stimulated by manufacturing and trade, Baltimore quickly became Maryland's principal city by the end of the American Revolution; by 1800 it was the third largest city in the nation. This transition from a rural village to a major urban center spawned an increase in the size and complexity of Baltimore's government. During the eighteenth century, the state controlled most of the town's official activities. Beginning in the 1780s, residents sought more self-government, a movement that reached fruition in 1796 when the state granted Baltimore status as an incorporated city. The early government was limited to a mayor, a city council, and several other officials. After the War of 1812, the municipal government began to expand into a multitude of agencies that replaced the private individuals and voluntary associations that had traditionally performed the bulk of public services. In 1898, a new city charter established the forerunner of a modern administrative structure in response to the city's continuing growth and need for improved services. Charter revisions in 1925, 1946, and 1964 have shaped Baltimore's government into its present responsive and wide-ranging structure.

¹Documenting America: Assessing the Condition of Historical Records in the States (N.p.: National Association of State Archives and Records Administrators, [1984]): 19-35.

The history of Baltimore's government in terms of records creation and management is similar to that of most other large cities in this country. For most of the eighteenth century - when the government was small and its activity limited - comparatively few records were produced. Lack of a formal organizational structure also resulted in limited records retention. After incorporation in 1796, the municipal government began to assume an increasing share of responsibility, which in turn generated a growing amount of records. Agencies with permanent employees and separate offices also began to retain more of the records produced. As the years passed and the volume and complexity of municipal records expanded, problems of storage and access developed. There was also hardly any thought given to preservation of material for historical purposes.

In 1874, the municipality made a significant move toward better record keeping practices by establishing a city library. This office had, among other duties, responsibility for maintenance and preservation of the city's records. While little was accomplished during the library's first few years, it had by the 1890s done some limited collecting of material judged to be of historical value. The work of the library reached a zenith in 1903 when Wilbur F. Coyle assumed the post of librarian. Coyle gathered historical records, arranged and indexed them, and published a collection of significant eighteenth and nineteenth century documents. His resignation in 1920, however, effectively ended this kind of work.

During the late 1930s, employees of the federally funded Historical Records Survey (HRS) compiled extensive item indexes to what was then seen as the entire corpus of the city's historical records. While these indexes remain very useful today, the HRS failed to make the most of its opportunity. Few records were added to the archival collection, and little came of any records surveys performed.

By the early 1950s, the mounting problem of records storage and access grew too difficult to ignore. In 1954, the municipal government created a records management program to deal with the proliferation of current records. Although the new agency was given control of the archival collection, no worthwhile work was done with the municipality's historical records for nearly 25 years. The focus of the program was instead upon storing and microfilming routine records identified in a 1954 city-wide survey. The records management program exercised comprehensive authority over the municipality's records for only a brief period, however. Many agencies failed to make use of the program's services, and by the mid-1960s only a small amount of the municipality's records were under systematic control.²

²For a detailed discussion of the archives's past, see Richard J. Cox, "The Plight of American Municipal Archives: Baltimore, 1729-1979," American Archivist 42 (July 1979): 281-292.

Compounding the problem of a weak records program was the vast growth of records generated by the municipality. The large sums of federal money that flowed into Baltimore starting in the mid-1960s came with reporting requirements that compelled city agencies to compile mountains of reports, statistical summaries, grant applications, correspondence, legal documents, and a host of other record types. And as their work load increased, agencies expanded, added staff, and continued to operate without proper records management guidance.

Baltimore's municipal records situation improved in 1978 with the hiring of a professional archivist and reorganization of the program. The first four years were taken up with arranging and describing the various historical records previously collected. Since 1981, it has been possible to aggressively pursue extant historical records and implement improved records management procedures. While much has been accomplished, a great deal of work lies ahead.

Holdings of the Archives

The archives collects, preserves, and administers the official records of the Baltimore municipal government judged to be of historical significance. Available records date from 1729 to the recent past, although most of the material is less than 75 years old. While the primary focus of the records is the municipal government, many other aspects of Baltimore's past are covered as well. An extensive array of record types are present, including correspondence, minutes, financial material, legal documents, forms, publications, maps, reports, and working papers. A variety of indexes and finding aids facilitate access to the material, and a knowledgeable staff is ready to provide detailed reference service.

The holdings of the Archives represent only a portion of the records created by the municipal government. In many cases, city agencies have in the past routinely thrown away or carelessly stored older records without concern for the possible historical value of the material. In other instances, officials have taken records with them after leaving municipal employment. Some records have also ended up in the possession of other archival institutions. The end result of all this is that there are sizeable gaps in our collection. As our work progresses, these gaps are filled in whenever possible.

Using the Guide

The records of the archives are arranged according to archival practice of record group and series, which is also used at the National Archives and most state and local public archival repositories. A record group is a body of records produced by a single agency (and sometimes by predecessor agencies as well) or a body of records that relate to a specific aspect or function of the municipal government. Each record group is composed of one or more series. A series is a group of documents arranged in accordance with a filing system or maintained as a unit because they relate to a particular function, result from the same activity, have a particular form, or because of some other relationship arising out of their creation, receipt, or use.³

The Guide discusses each record group separately. Included is the record group number, title, and date span; a brief administrative history of the agency or function that created the records; a summary of the record's content and coverage; and a description of the individual record series. Each series description consists of series number and title, date span, volume, and arrangement; reference is also made to the presence of an index or other finding aid, if appropriate. Fuller and more detailed descriptions of record groups and series are available at the archives, along with a number of other finding aids.

Several terms and expressions used to describe records require some explanation. There are four abbreviated terms: cu. ft. (cubic feet); lin. in. (linear inches); HRS (Historical Records Survey); and RG (record group). Dates given after the record group and series titles represent the chronological range within each batch of material. Records with date ranges listed as to "present" are split between the archives, which usually has records up to the last several years, and the office of origin, which has the more recent accretions. The term "box" may refer to an archival storage container (.45 cu. ft.), a records carton (1 cu. ft.), or any of three types of flat storage boxes. Microfilm is usually in a roll format. Indicated indexes or other finding aids are available for use at the archives.

³Frank B. Evans, et al, "A Basic Glossary for Archivists, Manuscript Curators, and Records Managers," American Archivist 37 (July 1974): 430.

The Records

RG 1 Town Commissioners (1729-97)

History

The state government created the Baltimore Town Commissioners as part of the 1729 legislative act for "erecting" Baltimore Town. Consisting of seven members, appointed for life, the commissioners were empowered to buy land, to survey and sell lots, and to settle disputes about property boundaries. The commission was the sole vestige of town government until the early 1780s. In 1745, when Jones Town became part of Baltimore, the commissioners gained authority to levy a poll tax. The state granted the body additional power in 1784 to erect street lamps and have them lighted, appoint constables and watchmen, levy a tax on property, and appoint a treasurer. Between this year and 1793 the commissioners also possessed the powers of justices of the peace. Occasionally the state assigned the commissioners special duties including construction of market houses, maintenance of streets, and collection of special assessments and taxes.

By the early 1780s the commissioners shared their administrative responsibilities with two new bodies: a Board of Baltimore Town Special Commissioners, which was mainly responsible for the construction and maintenance of streets and bridges; and a Board of Port Wardens, which regulated the construction of wharves, surveyed the harbor, and levied a tax on vessels. Despite the presence of these three bodies, essential administrative functions remained at Annapolis with the state government. In the mid-1780s Baltimoreans began to urge for incorporation to better regulate the town. The legislature passed such an act in 1796, and the following year the Baltimore Town Commissioners ceased to function. The new government consisted of a mayor, city council, and a handful of officials that absorbed the duties of the commissioners.

Records Summary

The records of the commissioners include minutes, surveys, salary accounts, and financial records. Subjects covered are market stall rentals, levy of special taxes and fees, inspection of cord wood, and construction and repair of roads. Most of these records have been published separately.

Series

1. Baltimore Town Commissioners and Jones Town Commissioners Record Book. 1729-47. 0.5 lin. in. (1 vol.). Arranged chronologically.
2. Baltimore Town Commissioners and Jones Town Commissioners Record Book. 1732-47. 0.5 lin. in. (1 vol.). Arranged chronologically.

3. Baltimore Town Commissioners Record Book and Ledger. 1746-88. 2.5 lin. in. (1 vol.). Arranged chronologically.
4. Baltimore Town Commissioners Ledger. 1782-86. 1.25 lin. in. (1 vol.). Arranged chronologically.
5. Baltimore Town Commissioners Ledger. 1786-97. 0.5 lin. in. (1 vol.). (Located at the Maryland Historical Society, MS 103). Arranged chronologically.
6. Cord Wood Inspector's Record Book. 1796-97. 0.25 lin. in. (1 vol.). Arranged chronologically.

RG 2 "Early Records of Baltimore" (1756-97)

History

Record group 2 consists of a two volume set of early records restored and bound together in chronological order. Most of the records are those of the Board of Town Commissioners, the Board of Special Commissioners, and Board of Port Wardens (see RG 1). This troika provided what little self-government Baltimore had until the city's incorporation in 1796. The special commissioners were mainly responsible for the construction and care of streets, and the port wardens for the care of the harbor and construction of wharves. Both bodies were incorporated, elected by an electoral college, and had restricted powers for levying special taxes.

Records Summary

These records are similar in content to those described in RG 1. For the most part administrative in nature, the material covers land acquisition and sale, street and wharf construction, taxation, and appropriations. Records include correspondence, financial accounts, legal documents, and petitions.

Series

1. Administrative Records. 1756-97. 4 lin. in. (2 vols.). Index. Arranged chronologically.

RG 3 City Commissioners (1797-1899)

History

The municipality established the city commissioners in 1797, shortly after the incorporation of the city government, for the management of street paving, leveling, repairing, opening, and closing (see RG 58); the care of wells and pumps; and the establishment of sewers and property boundaries. The complex work of the commissioners was often performed in conjunction with other municipal, county, and state agencies. Permission for the opening, extension, and closing of streets was, up to the 1840s, required from the state; the commissioners were responsible for the practical execution of the work. The commissioners funded their work through special assessments from affected property owners, special appropriations from the municipal government, and loans.

Through the years the commissioners underwent a number of administrative changes. From 1809 to 1820 they were united with the City Health Commissioners (RG19), and from 1820 to 1850 and again from 1861 to 1863 they were associated with the Board of Port Wardens. There were, in addition, other municipal agencies that labored under the direction of the city commissioners. From 1807 to 1839 and after 1845 the Superintendent of Streets and Pumps performed duties under the commissioners. Similarly, the commissioners supervised the work of the Commissioners for Opening Streets from 1851 to 1861 and after 1866.

The maintenance of streets during the nineteenth century was haphazard, experimental, and largely inadequate. Even so, street work did represent the largest municipal expenditure during Baltimore's early years. To improve street conditions, the 1898 charter abolished the commissioners and placed their duties under a new Department of Public Improvements, which in turn gave way to the present Department of Public Works (RG47) in 1925.

Records Summary

The commissioners' records consist largely of general administrative files covering the entire duration and range of their responsibility. Subjects covered are street construction and repair; acquisition of property; establishment of sewers; and construction and repair of bridges and sidewalks. Included are correspondence, reports, bonds, deeds and other property records, contracts, plats, bills and receipts, pump warrants, and petitions.

Series

1. Administrative Files. 1798-1899. 40.6 cu. ft. (116 boxes).
Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.
2. City Commissioners Reports. 1893-94. 1.5 lin. in.
Arranged chronologically.

RG 4 Property Tax Records (1798-present)

History

The taxation system in existence prior to the city charter of 1796 was completely dependent upon the authority of the state government. The beginning of a general property tax dates back to 1750 when the state allowed the Baltimore Town Commissioners (RG 1, RG 2) to levy an annual tax on each town lot. After their creation, the Board of Special Commissioners (RG 1, RG 2) and the Board of Port Wardens (RG 1, RG 2) also introduced other taxes.

The municipal government established by the 1796 charter brought autonomy to many aspects of the town's political life. The state still dominated taxation, although implementation of the charter began a slow evolution toward a more independent taxation system for the city. The earliest development of this system was the creation of a collector (RG 40) and a register (RG 32) in 1797. The collector was generally responsible for enforcing payment of all municipal taxes and fees. The register maintained the city's official records and functioned as treasurer for municipal funds. Throughout most of the nineteenth century, the register most likely kept the older tax books while the collector retained the current records.

The responsibilities of municipal agencies dealing with taxation changed frequently. In 1841, the city created the Appeal Tax Court (RG 5), which consisted of two assessors and the collector, to serve as a board of review for assessment determinations. In 1852, an auditor (RG 6) assumed control of tax collection and financial accounting. The comptroller (RG 43), established in 1857, took over the auditor's duties and eventually came to supervise the entire financial affairs of the municipality for the balance of the nineteenth century. With a new charter in 1898, the municipal government gained independence from the state with regard to property taxation. The charter established a Department of Finance composed of the comptroller, register, collector, collector of water rents and licenses, commissioners of finance, and board of estimates (RG 36). In 1934, responsibility for taxes was turned over to a Department of Assessments. In 1976, the municipality returned the function of assessing property back to the state, which now performs assessments on property in Baltimore on behalf of the city government.

Records Summary

Since numerous agencies have kept tax records over the years, and since the records are of fairly uniform content, these materials are maintained as a unit. Some related records are treated in descriptions of the Appeal Tax Court (RG 5) and the collector (RG 40).

There are four basic types of property tax records. The first type are the Field Assessor's Work Books (series 3 and 5), which were used to gather preliminary information about property. The material dates from 1837 to 1898 and 1907 to 1915. Details concerning

individual structures abounds in these records, including use, location, construction material, and number of stories. Data about personal property such as horses, wagons, furniture, and store stock also appear regularly. Generally speaking, these materials contain the most information of all the tax records.

The second variety of records, the Assessor's Tax Records (series 2), date from 1800 to 1866. These materials appear to be an intermediate record of property taxation and contain the same kinds of information as the Field Assessor's Work Books, but not in as much scope or detail.

The third type of record is the General Property Tax Books (series 1), which date from 1798 to 1915 and from 1966 to the present. These records represent the final form of tax information for a given year and appear to be based on information supplied by the Field Assessor's Work Books and the Assessor's Tax Records. The primary difference is that the data appearing in the tax books represents the final assessment levied against property after any appeals. Details provided about individual properties are similar to those found in the Assessor's Tax Records with the addition of notations about date of tax payment.

The fourth variety of materials are the Assessment Records (series 4), which date from 1914 to 1976. These records contain comparatively little information. Usually only the name and address of the property owner, along with the assessed value of their property, are included.

Most of the tax records are arranged by property location such as wards, precincts, and streets. These entities changed constantly in nineteenth century Baltimore, a fact that necessitates the use of special maps of the city to locate specific properties or individuals in many of the records. Some tax records are, however, accessible by the name of individual taxpayers. These are the materials covered by A Name Index to the Baltimore City Tax Records, 1798-1808 (Baltimore: Baltimore City Archives and Records Management Office, 1981) and the General Property Tax Records (series 1) dating from 1856 to 1907.

Series

1. Property Tax Records. 1798-1915; 1966-present.
104 lin. ft. (1033 vols.).
Arranged by year and thereunder by ward or by taxpayer.
2. Assessor's Tax Records. 1800-66. 13 lin. ft.
(120 vols.).
Arranged by year and thereunder by ward.
3. Assessor's Field Books. 1837-98. 31 lin. ft.
(495 vols.).
Arranged by year and thereunder by ward.

4. Assessment Records. 1914-76. 385 lin. ft. (6900 vols.).
Arranged by year and thereunder by ward.
5. Supplementary Assessor's Field Books. 1907-15. 18 lin. ft.
(245 vols.).
Arranged by year and thereunder by ward.

RG 5 Appeal Tax Court (1841-1947)

History

The state government created the Appeal Tax Court in 1841. Two assessors appointed annually by the mayor (RG 9) served as court members along with the collector (RG 40). Duties of the court included review of individual assessments, correction of assessment errors, and adjustment of assessments when property was sold or damaged. Chief among the court's tasks was the addition of new or improved property to the tax rolls.

Throughout its existence, the form and function of the Appeal Tax Court seems to have remained essentially the same. Between 1861 and 1866, the municipality had the court perform the responsibilities of the Commissioners of Opening Streets (see RG 58), which consisted of laying out, opening, extending, widening and straightening streets. In 1898, under the new municipal charter, the court became a division of the Department of Review and Assessments. The Appeal Tax Court's powers diminished with the creation of the Department of Assessments in 1934, and the Court was eventually abolished in 1947.

Records Summary

The available records of the Appeal Tax Court are varied, but not extensive. Much of the material relates to the court's responsibility to consider complaints about tax assessments and make any necessary adjustments. There are also records relating to assessments levied against newly identified property, both personal and corporate. Some materials in the record group preceded the court's founding in 1841, but appear to have been maintained by the agency during its existence.

Series

1. Administrative Files, 1839-65. 1.1 cu. ft. (3 boxes).
Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.
2. Minutes of the City Tax Commissioners. 1825-27.
1.5 lin. in. (1 vol.).
Arranged chronologically.

3. Abatement Ledgers and Journals. 1824-85. 3 lin. ft.
(28 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
4. Assessment Additions and Exemptions. 1842-66. 7 lin. in.
(4 vols.).
Arranged chronologically and thereunder by street address.
5. Appeal Tax Court Dockets. 1898-1905. 3.5 lin. in.
(5 vols.).
Arranged chronologically by date of case.
6. Maryland Corporation Stock records. ca. 1861-1914.
11 lin. in. (4 vols.).
Arranged alphabetically by name of corporation.
7. Property Transfers and Releases. 1813-57. 10 lin. in.
(7 vols.).
No visible arrangement.
8. Mortgage Releases. 1853, 1855-69. 1 lin. ft. (13 vols.).
Arranged chronologically and alphabetically by grantee.
9. Property Judgement Records. 1848-67. 8.5 lin. in.
(5 vols.).
Arranged chronologically and alphabetically by grantee.
10. Baltimore Stock Record. 1856. 1 lin in. (1 vol.).
Arranged alphabetically by stockholder name.
11. Appeal Tax Court Letterbook. 1853-54. 1 lin. in.
(1 vol.).
No visible arrangement.
12. Minutes of the Board of Control and Review. 1846-47,
1858-59, 1900-01. 4 lin. in. (3 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
13. Tax Schedules of the Safe Deposit & Trust Company for 1907.
1906. 1 lin. in. (1 vol.).
Arranged by schedule.
14. Minutes of the Board of Arbitration. 1859-63. 1 lin. in.
(1 vol.).
Arranged chronologically.
15. Assessments Against Banks, Distillers, and Incorporated
Companies. 1901-14. 1.5 lin. in. (1 vol.).
Arranged by business type and thereunder chronologically.

RG 6 City Auditor (1852-62)

History

The municipality created the Baltimore City Auditor in 1852 to audit tax collections, a duty the register (RG 32) previously performed. In 1853 the register regained auditing responsibilities when the auditor's duties were narrowed to the collection of tax arrearages, a job until then of the collector (RG 40). The municipality abolished the auditor and officially transferred the agency's responsibilities to the newly created office of comptroller (RG 43) in 1857. Since many accounts remained open, the auditor continued to function at least until 1859 when the comptroller finally gained complete control. But in 1860, the municipality extended the odd existence of the auditor by reestablishing the position with joint authority with the comptroller. By 1862, however, the comptroller and collector had apparently absorbed all the work of the auditor and the office ceased to function.

The most recent position of auditor (RG 61) dates from the 1926 creation of the Department of Audits and has no relationship with this earlier position.

Records Summary

Records of the auditor are, at best, spotty. There is some general correspondence about property sold at public auction for tax arrearages and about the opening and paving of streets. The remainder of the material consists of tax receipts dating from the late 1850s.

Series

1. Journal. 1853-55. 3 lin. in. (1 vol.).
Arranged chronologically.
2. Cash Books. 1854; 1856. 4 lin. in. (3 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
3. Tax Sales Record. 1855. 1.5 lin. in. (1 vol.).
Arranged chronologically.
4. City Auditor's Correspondence. 1856-59. 2 lin. in.
Arranged chronologically.
5. Reports. 1857-59. 2.25 lin. in.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.

RG 7 Civil Service Commission (1919-present)

History

A 1919 amendment to the city charter established the Baltimore City Service Commission ("civil" was exchanged for "city" in the agency's title in 1960). The mayor appointed three unpaid commissioners for six years, and the commissioners annually elected one of their number as president. The commissioners in turn appointed a salaried chief examiner who acted as both the secretary of the commission and the administrator of examinations.

Creation of the commission in 1919 marked the culmination of a lengthy effort to reorganize city personnel matters. The commission was authorized to classify and re-classify all municipal jobs (with the exception of mayoral appointments and appointments involving teaching or supervisory work) and to make appointments based on a merit system. The 1946 city charter empowered the commission to establish additional classes when deemed necessary and to rule on both individual and group appeals concerning such matters as leave, dismissals, and transfers. Also required of the commission was maintenance of eligibility lists for classified positions.

The commission was instrumental in the establishment of a general municipal pension and retirement system in 1926. This plan was the first of its kind in Baltimore and provided retirement, disability, and death benefits for municipal employees. A board of trustees determined the eligibility of employees for benefits from the retirement fund. In conjunction with creation of the fund, the commission established a mandatory retirement age of 70 for civil service employees.

Although there were sporadic attempts to improve the efficiency of the commission, the first successful effort came in 1954. The commission at that time hired an independent company to develop classification, wage, and salary policies. Additional studies were conducted in subsequent years in an effort to improve city personnel functions.

Records Summary

The most important records for tracing the history of the municipal civil service are the minutes of the commission. The first few years of minutes describe general organizational matters. From 1922 to 1950 the minutes mainly concern classifications and transfers, leaves, and dismissals of individual employees. After 1950 the minutes generally discuss examinations and special group appeals. The remainder of the records consist of general administrative records of the commission and personnel records. Personnel records are restricted and require prior authorization before their use.

Series

1. Minutes. 1919-73. 8 lin. ft. (63 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
2. Medical Examiner Diary. 1 lin. in. (1 vol.).
Arranged chronologically.
3. General Correspondence. 1966-74. 0.675 cu. ft.
(1.5 boxes).
Arranged chronologically.
4. Subject Correspondence. 1921-78; bulk dates 1966-75.
3.4 cu. ft. (7.5 boxes). File folder listing.
Arranged by subject.
5. Personnel File Cards. 1920-72; bulk dates 1920-55.
108 reels of microfilm. Restricted.
Arranged alphabetically by surname.
6. Labor Registration Bureau Registration Cards. 1935-54.
3 reels of microfilm. Restricted.
Arranged chronologically and alphabetically thereunder by
surname.
7. Classified Applications. 1920-74; bulk dates 1920-66.
69 reels of microfilm. Restricted.
Arranged chronologically and alphabetically thereunder by
surname.
8. Roster Index Cards of Ex-employees. 1920-65.
19 reels of microfilm. Restricted.
Arranged alphabetically by surname.
9. Roster Cards. 1926-57. 6 reels of microfilm. Restricted.
Arranged alphabetically by surname.
10. Medical Services Division Administrative Subject Files.
1941-78. 1.1 cu. ft. (2.5 boxes). File folder listing.
Arranged by subject.
11. Personnel Files. 1977. 8 reels of microfilm.
Arranged alphabetically by surname.
12. Fire Department Roster Cards. 1920-57.
2 reels of microfilm. Restricted.
Arranged alphabetically by surname.

RG 8 Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation
(1964-present)

History

The municipality established the Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation (CHAP) in 1964 "to preserve the historic, cultural, educational and architectural value of buildings and structures located in certain areas in the city." The main tasks of CHAP have been designating historical and architectural preservation districts and compiling landmark lists; the agency also operates a salvage depot and advises on historical and architectural preservation. The commission is composed of eleven members appointed by the mayor with the approval of the city council. Members serve five-year terms and a salaried executive director runs the commission's daily operation.

Records Summary

With the exception of the first two series, the records of the commission are maintained permanently in its offices. The records consist of research files on the preservation districts and other historical buildings and the minutes of the commission, which cover its activities in architectural preservation projects. Series

Series

1. Square Mile Sheets and Miscellaneous Building Plans.
1964-present. 1 reel of microfilm.
No arrangement.
2. Minutes of the Commission. 1964-present. 2 reels of
microfilm.
Arranged chronologically.
3. Building Surveys. 1964-present.
Arranged alphabetically by building.
4. Historic District Building Files, 1964-present.
Arranged alphabetically by building.
5. Landmarks List. 1964-present.
Arranged alphabetically by site.

History

The municipal government established in 1796 was modeled after the federal constitution with a two-branch legislature (city council) and an independent executive (mayor). Reflecting a conservative philosophy, the charter restricted office holding and voting to men of means. The council's two branches provided both a voice to the general populace through a popularly elected lower chamber and a conservative influence through an upper chamber composed of the social and political elite. Members of the lower chamber, or first branch, of the council had to possess \$1,000 of assessed property and were popularly elected on an annual basis, two from each ward. Ballots were cast by voice vote by residents owning property worth at least thirty pounds currency. Every other year, voters selected one elector from each ward and the electors in turn chose the eight members of the upper chamber, or second branch, of the council. The electors also chose the mayor, who had to own \$2,000 worth of property. It was also necessary to own \$2,000 in property to serve in the second branch.

The 1796 charter granted the mayor and city council specific power to regulate markets, streets, lots, bridges, police, fire companies, sewers, public health, and waterways. The municipal government also levied taxes and enacted all laws necessary to govern the city within the authority conferred by the charter. While this system gave Baltimore more local authority than it had ever possessed, the state continued its traditional dominance in many areas; the state was, in fact, reluctant to part with its traditional power even into the twentieth century.

According to the charter, the mayor assumed the position of prime importance in the municipal government. Mayoral authority covered supervision of elections, enforcement of ordinances, and veto power. The mayor also appointed all city officers from a list supplied by the council; supervised the police force, harbor dredging, and street lighting; directed a variety of attempts to introduce fresh water into the city; and administered the municipal budget. Equipped with a broad range of responsibility and prerogative, the mayor's office was firmly established as the most significant element of Baltimore government by 1800.

Many aspects of the Baltimore executive changed during the antebellum period. The mayor for the first two decades under the 1796 charter selected one of two candidates named by the council for each official position. In 1817, the mayor gained authority to freely nominate any individual he wished with the advice and consent of the council. The most significant change occurred in 1833 when the state revised the city electoral system and provided for direct election of the mayor.

The council also underwent modification in its early years. In 1808 the use of electors to select the second branch was discontinued in favor of direct popular elections, and the property requirements for council members were also sharply curtailed. An increase in population led to the redistricting of Baltimore's fourteen wards into twenty in 1845. Because of the increase in the number of wards, representation in the first branch was reduced from two members to one member per ward to maintain a manageably sized body. Concurrent reorganization of the second branch provided for the election of delegates from every two contiguous wards.

In 1860, the mayor had his authority abruptly diminished in some areas. The state stripped the executive of its jurisdiction over the local police and created the Board of Police Commissioners to superintend the force. This action was justified by the inability - or unwillingness - of the Baltimore police to put down the violent election riots of the 1850s. Pointing to the city's laxity concerning fair voting procedures, the state also transferred responsibility of election supervision from the mayor to the police commissioners.

The influence of the mayor continued to expand during the second half of the nineteenth century. Mayoral initiative guided the growth of the city bureaucracy, and most new jobs created were tied into mayoral patronage. Despite this single source of power, the city government developed haphazardly; by the late 1890s over forty municipal agencies existed, all of which functioned independently of one another.

A remedy was sought in 1898 when Mayor William T. Malster appointed a commission to frame a new city charter. Quickly approved, the charter consolidated the profusion of city agencies into nine departments. The most significant change was the creation of a Board of Estimates charged with determining the municipal budget. As the mayor and two of his appointees formed a majority on the five member board, the executive gained centralized control of budgetary matters.

The 1898 municipal charter drastically reduced the power of the city council. Previously the joint ways and means committee of the council annually set the municipal tax rate and the appropriations schedule for municipal departments. With establishment of the Board of Estimates, the council could only reduce appropriations in the budget as prepared by the board. Through the mayor's domination of the board, his power increased while that of the council ebbed. The desire for greater council efficiency led in 1922 to the restructuring from a bicameral to a unicameral body. Three delegates elected from each of the six newly created councilmanic districts served four year terms. This system remains in effect today.

During the twenty years following the 1898 charter, the mayor reached a zenith in his power. Introduction of a civil service system for city employees in 1919, however, lessened the mayor's influence through the demise of widespread political patronage. The mayor's administrative domain continued to broaden in other areas with the constant growth of the city's political structure. Mayoral commissions and committees multiplied in the 1950s, and this trend continues into the 1980s. Traditionally the focal point of the city government, the mayor continues to direct most aspects of municipal activities.

Records Summary

Baltimore is especially fortunate in having a nearly continuous run of mayoral records from the creation of the office in 1797 until the present. The records cover nearly every subject pertaining to the municipal government, including taxation, licensing, ordinances and resolutions, public health, schools, property ownership, litigation, railroads, claims against the city, proposals, charitable enterprises, opening and closing streets, paving streets, citizen complaints, relationship with state and federal governments, port concerns, general administration, requests for information and publications from other municipalities, and applications for and appointments to municipal positions. Prior to 1906, the records are grouped together as they were originally organized by the Historical Records Survey in the late 1930s. There are folder listings for all mayoral administrative files dating after 1906.

Series

1. Calhoun Correspondence to City Council. 1797-1802.
2 lin. in.
Arranged chronologically.
2. Mayor's HRS Correspondence. 1797-1923. 26.1 cu. ft.
(58 boxes). Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.
3. Miscellaneous Incoming Mayoral Correspondence. 1885-1900.
7 cu. ft. (15.5 boxes).
Arranged chronologically.
4. Miscellaneous Outgoing Mayoral Correspondence. 1885-1900.
5 lin. in.
Arranged chronologically.
5. Police Marshall Frey, Incoming Correspondence. 1890-96.
0.25 lin. in.
Arranged chronologically.
6. General Correspondence. 1884-96. 1 lin. in.
Arranged chronologically.

7. Fragments. 1883-1900. 0.25 lin. in.
No arrangement.
8. Mayor Alcaeus Hooper, Inspector of Gas and Illuminating
Oils Reports. 1895-96. 1.25 lin. in.
Arranged chronologically.
9. Mayor Alcaeus Hooper, Health Department Reports. 1896.
0.75 lin. in.
Arranged chronologically.
10. Assorted Printed Items. 1837-1900. 0.25 lin. in.
No arrangement.
11. Typescript Copies of Ordinances and Resolutions.
ca. 1890-96. 0.5 lin. in.
No arrangement.
12. Assorted Mayoral Records. ca. 1875-1900. 1.25 lin. in.
No arrangement.
13. Timanus Administrative Files. 1902-08. 7.2 cu. ft.
(16 boxes). File folder listing.
Arranged by subject.
14. Mahool Administrative Files. 1906-14. 14.4 cu. ft.
(32 boxes). File folder listing.
Arranged by subject.
15. Preston Administrative Files. 1908-19. 18.9 cu. ft.
(42 boxes). File folder listing.
Arranged by subject.
16. Broening Administrative Files (first term). 1919-23.
5.4 cu. ft. (12 boxes). File folder listing.
Arranged by subject.
17. Jackson Administrative Files (first term). 1923-27.
4.5 cu. ft. (10 boxes). File folder listing.
Arranged by subject.
18. Broening Administrative Files (second term). 1927-31.
6.3 cu. ft. (14 boxes). File folder listing.
Arranged by subject.
19. Jackson Administrative Files (second term). 1929-35.
13 cu. ft. (29 boxes). File folder listing.
Arranged by subject.
20. Jackson Administrative Files (third term). 1935-39.
5.5 cu. ft. (12 boxes). File folder listing.
Arranged by subject.

21. Jackson Administrative Files (fourth term). 1938-42.
5 cu. ft. (11 boxes).
Arranged by subject.
22. McKeldin Administrative Files (first term). 1943-47.
4 cu. ft. (9 boxes). File folder listing.
Arranged by subject.
23. D'Alesandro, Jr. Administrative Files. 1946-59.
25 cu. ft. (55 boxes). File folder listing.
Arranged by subject.
24. Grady-Goodman Administrative Files. 1951-63. 18.5 cu. ft.
(41 boxes).
Arranged by subject.
25. McKeldin Administrative Files (second term). 1955-67.
40.5 cu. ft. (89 boxes). File folder listing.
Arranged by subject.
26. D'Alesandro III Administrative Files. 1951-71.
53.5 cu. ft. (119 boxes). File folder listing.
Arranged by subject in three sub-series.
27. Printed Mayoral Material. 1801-1971.
Arranged by classification system of individual repository.
28. Mayoral Letterbooks. 1871-1907. 1.8 lin. ft. (26 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
29. City Appointees. 1797-1899. 8 lin. in. (7 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
30. Oath Books. 1862-1962. 2.2 lin. ft. (16 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
31. Permit and Complaint Books. 1873-79. 2.5 lin. in.
(5 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
32. Mayor's Record Books. 1844-75. 5 lin. in. (5 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
33. Visitors Book. 1912-18. 3 lin. in. (5 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
34. Mayoral Campaigns. 1911-35. 4.25 lin. in. (4 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
35. General Mayoral Records. 1860-1919. 8 lin. in.
(9 vols.).
No arrangement.

36. Mayoral Records Indexes. ca. 1880-1915. 6.5 lin. in. (8 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
37. General Public Improvement Conference Records. 1904-05. 0.45 cu. ft. (1 box).
Arranged by committee.

RG10 Baltimore Court House Commissioners (1835-40)

History

The Maryland legislature created the Baltimore Court House Commissioners in 1835 to rebuild the Baltimore City and County Court House and Record Office, which had been destroyed by fire on February 13 of that year. The commissioners were in existence from 1835 until the buildings were completed and opened for use in 1840. Housed in the new buildings were the meeting rooms, offices, and records of the Baltimore County Court and Orphan's Court of Baltimore County. Located on the corner of Lexington and St. Paul Streets, the buildings were razed in 1894 to make way for a larger court house.

Records Summary

While the volume of these records is small, the material appears to be complete. All phases of the planning and construction of the court buildings are covered. Included are letters from Robert Cary Long, Jr., Robert Mills, and William Strickland concerning the architectural design of the structures; correspondence of Solomon Etting, President of the Baltimore Court House Commissioners; bank books and daily memos; proposals for brick and lumber supply, painting, glass, iron, and stone work, and other contracts; payroll records and receipts; contractor's bonds; and recommendations for employment. Also included are five plans of the record office by Robert Cary Long, Jr.

Series

1. Administrative Records. 1835-40. 1.1 cu. ft. (3 boxes).
Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.
2. Architectural Drawings. ca.1835-ca.1840. 5 items.
Arranged chronologically.

History

The Baltimore County Levy Court exercised administrative authority over elections held in Baltimore prior to the city's incorporation. The 1796 city charter empowered the mayor to administer elections through appointment of election judges for each city ward. Baltimore County elections continued under the jurisdiction of the levy court until 1826 when the Baltimore County Commissioners assumed responsibility.

Doubts concerning the city government's ability to fairly administer voting procedures led the state in 1860 to transfer responsibility for elections to the newly created and state controlled Board of Police Commissioners. This body was to subdivide the city's wards into election precincts, appoint judges of election for each precinct, and prevent all forms of election fraud. Sixteen years later, the state established the Board of Supervisors of Elections to oversee all phases of municipal elections, including the appointment of election judges for all city precincts. Up to the present day, this board continues to function essentially as originally determined.

Baltimore election officials from the late eighteenth century to the early 1900s were greatly concerned with suppressing irregular activities such as ineligible voter balloting, individuals casting multiple votes, and ballot box stuffing. Several measures were taken at various times to curb these abuses, and the use of poll books were among the first efforts in this direction. Election judges for each district were required to record in two volumes the names of all residents voting in a specific election. This procedure theoretically prevented a person from voting more than once and also allowed a comparison between the total number of voters and the total number of votes cast in each district. After elections, duplicate Baltimore City and County poll books were turned over to the county court for maintenance until the legal separation of city and county in 1851. After this date, the Baltimore City Superior Court received municipal poll books while Baltimore County volumes continued to be deposited in the county court.

In 1837, the state enacted "an act to guard against Fraud in the exercise of the Elective Franchise in the City of Baltimore." Among other provisions, the law mandated yearly registration of all city voters. Three officers of registration, appointed by the governor for each ward, administered this activity. All persons desiring to cast ballots were to appear before the registration officials for their ward of residence and prove their eligibility to vote under state law. If a person qualified, their name was entered alphabetically into two poll registration books. When elections were held, the election judges were required to allow only those ward residents listed in the registration volumes to vote.

A state law passed in 1882 modified previous registration laws by calling for two sets of registry books for each Baltimore election precinct. A preliminary set was to list names and other personal information relating to all persons applying for voting privileges; those individuals who failed to meet specified requirements were noted as such in the books along with the reasons why. Final registration volumes were to contain only the names and addresses of voters approved by the officers of registration. Voter registration in Baltimore is currently conducted in a similar fashion except a single board of registration is appointed for the entire city by the supervisors of elections.

Records Summary

These records, much like the tax records (RG 4), are grouped together more out of their similarity than a common administrative origin. In terms of their content, the records are for the most part incomplete. The potential value of the materials for research varies widely among the different series.

Perhaps the most useful material in this record group is the 1868 Police Census (series 9). This apparently is a record of a population survey conducted by the Police Department as part of their effort to readjust ward and precinct boundaries. It is believed that the census was never completed; in any event, information about some 20,000 city residents living in six wards is available. For each person listed, details are provided about their name, street address, age, sex, race, country of birth, occupation, religion, and naturalization status. Arrangement of the census is by ward and precinct.

A second type of record - the Baltimore City Poll Books (Registration) (series 4) - also contain much useful information. Records dating from 1838, 1839, 1877, and 1879 list the names of each qualified voter with their address, voting dates, whether housekeeper or lodger, and name of landlord. Particulars effecting registration status such as removal from district, death, legal age, and naturalization occasionally appear as well. An 1868 volume provides only names of qualified voters. Preliminary registration volumes dating from 1882 to 1887 and 1889 have applicant's name; whether sworn or affirmed; age; place of birth; residence; time of residence in Baltimore, ward of registration, and precinct of registration; naturalization information; and reasons for disqualification, if applicable. Final registration volumes for 1889 list only the names and addresses of qualified voters. All records dating from 1877 and after are very incomplete.

The earliest materials are the Baltimore City Poll Books (series 3), dating from 1804 to 1889, and the Baltimore County Poll Books (series 5), dating from 1803 to 1888. Each of these series contains thousands of volumes arranged by city wards or county districts. And while both are complete up to the mid 1840s, they reveal no information beyond the names of people who voted in a specific year and occasional statistical tabulations of election returns. (The records for Baltimore County are presumably the duplicate copies submitted to the Baltimore City Court).

Additional election records include lists of registration alterations, election officials, and city precinct boundaries. The only modern records available are the 1951 city-wide voters list (series 2), general statistical summaries showing the numbers of registered voters, and statistical returns for all elections held in the city from 1896 to the present.

Series

1. Registration and Election Returns. 1896-present.
23 reels of microfilm.
Arranged chronologically and thereunder by wards and precincts.
2. City-wide Voters List. 1951. 1 reel of microfilm.
Arranged by ward, precinct, and street address.
3. Baltimore City Poll Books. 1804-89. 16 lin. ft.
(3,071 vols.).
Arranged by ward (after 1860 by precinct).
4. Baltimore City Poll Books (Registration). 1838-39.
18.4 lin. ft. (477 vols.).
Arranged by election districts.
5. Baltimore County Poll Books. 1803-88. 3.2 lin. ft.
(478 vols.).
Arranged by election districts.
6. Baltimore County Poll Books (Registration). 1888.
3 lin. in. (6 vols.).
Arranged by district and precinct and alphabetically thereunder.
7. Numbers and Boundaries of Election Precincts. 1882-88.
1 lin. in. (2 vols.).
Arranged sequentially.
8. Election Officials. 1897-1909. 6 lin. in. (6 vols.).
Arranged chronologically by year and alphabetically thereunder.
9. Police Census. 1868. 1 reel of microfilm.
Arranged by ward, precinct, and street address.
10. Registration Alterations. 1879. 0.45 cu. ft. (1 box).
Arranged by ward of registration.

RG 12 Cartographic Records (1730-present)

History

Since Baltimore's founding in 1729, the city has accumulated a vast amount of cartographic records. Through the years, various agencies have been responsible for the creation and maintenance of these records. During the eighteenth century, the Baltimore County Surveyor was generally accountable. After incorporation of the city in 1796, the city commissioners periodically contracted with a private surveyor, and from the mid-nineteenth century the rosters of municipal officials usually mention this official. The 1898 charter provided for an elected surveyor, a position that existed until creation of a Department of Public Works (RG 47) in 1925, which absorbed these responsibilities. In 1968 the Department of Public Works was reorganized to include a Division of Surveys and Records, which now conducts such work.

Records Summary

Although these records do not technically constitute a record group since numerous municipal agencies generated them, the nature of the materials allows for their organization as a single unit. The great variety of images in this collection includes representations of individual property lots, streets, city blocks, sections of the city, and the entire city. For the most part, municipal (or other) authorities created these maps in the performance of everyday duties like extending or repairing streets (by far the most common activity reflected in these records), constructing wharves, altering the course of the Jones Falls, surveying property boundaries, and annexing property. Aside from maps, the records also include scattered architectural drawings of bridges and buildings.

The thousands of maps generated by government activity and held by the archives have a number of factors in common. They usually are hand-drawn, relate to specific concerns such as the extension of one street, and exist in limited numbers. A small collection of printed city-wide ward maps and insurance atlases are also maintained as part of this record group.

Tracking down a specific map can be a time consuming process, despite the fact that the archives has several indexes. The most useful of these finding aids is a chronological item listing of all maps relating to Baltimore dating from 1730 to 1851; the names of people, streets, and places that appear on each map are indexed. An older map index covers the approximately 6,600 items appearing in the Microfilmed Cartographic Records (series 1). The primary difficulty with this index is that it provides only an alphabetical listing of assigned map subjects. Descriptions are very brief and no dates are indicated. Related to this alphabetical listing is a card index that is arranged alphabetically by city street names. A smaller card index provides incomplete subject access to the cartographic records. Both these card indexes are limited by their lack of completeness and certain items of important information. The chief use of these older finding aids is to locate images dating after 1851.

Series

1. Microfilmed Cartographic Records. ca. 1730-1964.
4 lin. ft. (6,647 items). Index.
Arranged sequentially by assigned numbers.
2. Jehu Bouldin Atlases. ca. 1816-19. 80 oversize items.
Index.
Arranged sequentially by assigned numbers.
3. "Atlas 6." 1767-1818. 76 oversize items. Index.
Arranged sequentially by assigned numbers.
4. "Atlas 5." 1783-1878. 36 oversize items. Index.
Arranged sequentially by assigned numbers.
5. "Atlases 2 and 2 1/2." 1792-1840. 64 oversize items.
Index.
Arranged sequentially by assigned numbers.
6. Linen tracings. 1729-ca.1900.
336 oversize items. Index.
Arranged sequentially by assigned numbers.
7. Atlas of the City of Baltimore, Maryland (Philadelphia:
G.W. Bromley and Co., 1906). 1 reel of microfilm.
8. Atlas of the City of Baltimore, Maryland (Philadelphia:
G.W. Bromley and Co., 1896). 1 reel of microfilm.
9. Square Mile Sheets. 1914. 1 reel of microfilm.
Arranged chronologically.
10. Miscellaneous Maps. 1794-1928.
One file drawer and one reel of microfilm.
Arranged chronologically.
11. Miscellaneous Maps. 1782-1912 and undated.
29 oversize items.
Arranged chronologically.
12. Atlas of the City of Baltimore, Maryland (Philadelphia:
G.W. Bromley and Co., 1885, 1887). 1 reel of microfilm.
13. "Plats City of Baltimore No. 3." 1836-67.
61 oversize items. Index.
Arranged sequentially by number.
14. "Atlas B." 1840-68. 68 oversize items. Index.
Arranged sequentially by number.
15. "Plats City of Baltimore No. 4." 1730-1848.
17 oversize items. Index.
Arranged sequentially by number.

16. "Early Additions to Baltimore Town." ca.1797-ca.1828.
1 lin. in. (1 vol.).
No arrangement.
17. Topographical Survey Files. 1894-95. 0.5 lin. in. Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.
18. Baltimore, Maryland (New York: Sanborn Map and Publishing Co., 1880). 1 reel of microfilm.

RG 13 Law Department

History

During its early years, the municipal government contracted with private lawyers for legal assistance. In 1838 the municipality decreed that "there shall annually be appointed from the members of the Baltimore bar, a counselor of the City of Baltimore, to act as its attorney, with whom the mayor and city council and the officers of the corporation may advise and consult, as occasion may require." The city established the position of Baltimore City Solicitor to assist the counselor in 1864. In 1900 a Law Department was established and the position of solicitor became a regular salaried position appointed by the mayor to function as attorney for all municipal agencies. The solicitor also served as a member of the Board of Estimates.

Records Summary

From an early date, individuals serving the municipality in a legal capacity were involved in a myriad of activities. Even the small portion of these records dating prior to establishment of the Law Department in 1900 contains an impressive array of official opinions, correspondence, and legal documents. After 1900, the records reflect in great detail the intricacies of the city's legal involvements. These later records do, however, tend to focus on three areas: property acquisition (particularly for streets, and later, urban renewal projects), law suits involving the city, and general administrative responsibilities of the department.

Records associated with property matters comprise several different series within this record group. In some cases the records overlap, but this is an inevitable result of the massive volume and original arrangement of the materials. Subjects covered include the acquisition of land for street openings, closings, condemnations, extensions and widenings; and construction of schools, fire houses, and parks. After 1950, the records reflect Baltimore's growing involvement with urban renewal. Among the items found in these property records are instruments of title transfer, condemnation proceedings, title abstracts, correspondence, settlement sheets, and legal agreements.

Records associated with law suits involving the city are chiefly located in the Casefiles (series 2). This massive series in theory contains records of every official case handled by the department. Arrangement of the files is by a sequential numbering system. At the time of this writing, the number of files has grown to over 130,000. A set of Case File Dockets (series 11) provide a crude chronological index to material dating from 1898 to 1903 and 1934 to the present. An incomplete subject index covering the years 1919 to 1934 is also available. Materials in the casefiles vary. Commonly found are depositions, court minutes, briefs, correspondence, and other documents associated with legal contests.

The administrative records of the department are varied as well. Included are the official legal opinions of the solicitor, subject files, correspondence files, and some financial records. Individual files of specific department personnel are in some cases available after the mid-1960s.

Series

1. Opinions of the City Solicitor. 1903-present. 13 reels of microfilm. Index.
Arranged chronologically.
2. Casefiles. 1903-present. 1775 cu. ft. (1775 boxes).
Partial Index.
Arranged sequentially by file numbers.
3. HRS Indexed Records. 1819-64. 0.45 cu. ft. (1 box).
Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.
4. Street Improvement Property Records. 1873-1944. Index.
82 cu. ft. (82 boxes).
Arranged by sub-group and thereunder by street name.
5. Administrative Subject Files. 1900-71. 3.15 cu. ft. (7 boxes). File folder listing.
Arranged by subject.
6. Administrative Chronological Files. 1930-49. 1.8 cu. ft. (4 boxes).
Arranged chronologically.
7. Property Acquisition Files. ca.1900-80. 163 cu. ft. (163 boxes).
Arranged by project.
8. Real Estate Division Subject Files. 1944-59. 1.1 cu. ft. (2.5 boxes).
Arranged by subject.

- 8a. Real Estate Division Chronological Files. 1940-74.
3.6 cu. ft. (8 boxes).
Arranged as separate reading files and chronologically thereunder.
9. Friendship Airport Files. 1939-71. 1.8 cu. ft.
(4 boxes).
Arranged by subject.
10. Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Track Route Ground Rent Files.
1911. 1.8 cu. ft. (4 boxes).
Arranged by file number.
11. Case File Dockets. 1898-1903, 1934-78. 2 lin. ft.
(11 vols.).
Arranged chronologically by date of court filing.
12. Voucher Register and Journal. 1910-24. 2 lin. in.
(1 vol.).
Arranged chronologically by date of purchase.

RG 14 Aviation Commission (1928-50)

History

In the midst of the excitement generated by Charles Lindbergh's transatlantic flight, Mayor William F. Broening appointed the Baltimore City Aviation Committee to find a site for an airport. The committee acted quickly and in 1928 recommended an area on the Patapsco River straddling the Baltimore City-Baltimore County border. Initial plans called for a 1,000 acre site that would serve as an aviation industrial park and as an airport for both sea and land aircraft. The idea was a bold one, for all but 100 acres of the planned airport was to be constructed on land reclaimed from the Patapsco by use of silt raised during dredging of the harbor.

Problems cropped up immediately with the plan. Some technical experts expressed doubts that reclaimed land would be suitable for an airport. It was decided to cut the size of the airport to 360 acres and to improve nearby Logan Field, then a private airstrip. But difficulties continued to dog the project, primarily because the mud fill refused to solidify quickly enough. With the advent of the Depression, work ceased on the project, only to resume again in 1936 with federal funds. In November of 1941, the facility, known as the Baltimore Municipal Airport, was ready to open. But soon after World War II broke out, the Army assumed control of the field until 1944.

As the war was ending, it became apparent that Baltimore needed a different airport, one further removed from the obstructions of the city and with longer landing runways. In 1944, plans were made to construct a facility nine miles south of the city. Christened

Friendship International Airport (and now known as Baltimore-Washington International Airport), the facility opened in 1950. The old Municipal Airport was renamed Harbor Field and was used for auxiliary purposes until 1960 when it was sold to the Maryland Port Authority. The municipal government exercised control over the new airport until 1977 when the facility was transferred to the state.

Records Summary

This record group consists of the administrative files of the various agencies charged with the planning, construction, and operation of Baltimore's airports up to 1950. Most aspects of airport activities are covered in the materials, although there are gaps. The focus of the material is upon construction of the original municipal airport in the Baltimore harbor. Record types include correspondence, minutes, clippings, reports, testimony before public hearings, land and other legal documents, legislation, maps, and publications.

Series

1. Administrative Files. 1928-50. 4 cu. ft. (9 boxes).
File folder listing.

RG 15 National Star-Spangled Banner Centennial Commission (1914-15)

History

The commission had two avowed purposes: sponsoring a flag centennial celebration in Baltimore and promoting the flag as a national patriotic symbol. The commission was the idea of Mayor James H. Preston, who did his best to bring the organization into national prominence. Despite falling short in this goal, the commission did succeed in holding a celebration in Baltimore during the week of September 6-13, 1914.

Records Summary

These materials consist of financial records relating to the commission's activity between 1914 and 1915. Also included are some correspondence, newspaper clippings, lists of commission members, and photographs.

Note: there is a 1914 minute book of this organization at the Maryland Historical Society, MS 2263.

Series

1. Financial Ledgers. 1914-15. 0.45 cu. ft. (1 box).
Arranged chronologically.

2. Vouchers. 1913-15. 0.90 cu. ft. (2 boxes).
Arranged sequentially by voucher number.
3. Photographic Scrapbook. 1914. (1 vol.).
(Transferred to the Peale Museum).
Arranged by subject.

RG 16 City Council (1797-present)

History

For the history of the council, see RG 9.

Records Summary

These records are among the most significant held by the archives. They cover practically every aspect of Baltimore's historical development, particularly during the nineteenth century. Some of the many subjects dealt with are special investigations; creation of municipal agencies; citizen complaints; relationship with the state and federal governments; legislative enactments; personnel selections; annexation of properties to the city; construction of streets, sewers, and bridges; and social concerns of all types.

The council materials fall into two general groups. The administrative files (series 1) date from 1797 to 1923, and relate to all areas of the council's activity. Included are correspondence, petitions, reports, drafts of legislation, and procedural documents.

The second group of council materials deal exclusively with legislative activities. Basic among these records are the official ordinances and resolutions enacted into law from 1797 to the present. The most accessible form of the ordinances and resolutions are the annual published volumes (series 5). A separate index is available for all legislation passed up to 1906; after this date, the researcher must rely on the individual volume indexes. Closely related to the printed legislation are a series of records known as the Official City Council Files (series 4). Dating from 1913 to the present, these records are ordinance and resolution working papers. They consist of legislative drafts, correspondence, reports, amendments, and maps or drawings associated with individual ordinances and resolutions. The City Council Journal of Proceedings (series 2), dating from 1801 to the present, are also linked to the legislative process. These records are accounts of the council's daily business, including procedural matters, committee reports, correspondence, and drafts of legislation.

Series

1. Administrative Files. 1797-1923. 103 cu. ft. (322 boxes).
Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.

2. City Council Journal of Proceedings. 1801-present.
5 lin. ft. (30 vols.). Index.
Arranged chronologically.
3. Joint Council Convention Journal. 1818-1902. 1.5 lin. ft.
(10 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
4. Official City Council Files. 1913-77. 70.2 cu. ft.
(156 boxes).
Arranged sequentially by introductory bill number within
councilmanic terms. Records of 1963-67 are arranged by
final ordinance number.
5. Ordinances and Resolutions. 1797-present. 35 lin. ft.
(186 vols.).
Arranged sequentially by final ordinance and resolution
numbers.
6. Miscellaneous Manuscripts. 1799-1969. 3 lin. ft.
(3 vols.).
No arrangement.
7. City Council Records Index. 1870-93. 1.25 lin. ft.
(27 vols.).
Arranged alphabetically by subject.
8. Records of Readings. 1905-30. 3.75 lin. in. (3 vols.).
No arrangement.
9. Indexes to Ordinances and Resolutions. 1841-1975.
4 lin. ft. (34 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
10. Records of the funerals of Thomas Jefferson and the
Marquis de Lafayette. 1826 and 1834. 0.25 lin. ft. Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.
11. Estate of John McDonogh. 1851-57. 3.25 lin. in. Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.
12. Maryland Canal Papers. 1836-37. 0.25 lin. in.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.

RG 17 Burnt District Commission (1904-07)

History

The Baltimore fire of February 1904 destroyed 140 acres, 1,500 buildings, and four large lumber yards, leaving over thirty-five thousand Baltimoreans jobless. Total damages were estimated between \$125 and \$150 million. Shortly after the fire the municipality empowered the Burnt District Commission to plan, improve, and rebuild the destroyed areas. The commission worked three and one half years to reduce street grades, widen streets, plan public squares and market spaces, establish building lines and sidewalks, and improve the harbor. Spending over seven million dollars, the commission removed hundreds of buildings and widened St. Paul, Pratt, Light, German, Lombard, and Charles Streets. The commission also encouraged the speedy rebuilding of the commercial district.

Records Summary

The records of the Burnt District Commission are reasonably complete. Most aspects of the body's work in supervising the recovery of the area destroyed by the blaze are covered, including clearing rubble, acquiring property, granting franchises, improving wharves, and widening and paving streets. Types of records present include reports, legal documents, correspondence, and maps.

Series

1. Semi-Annual Commission Reports. 1904-07. 1.4 cu. ft. (3 boxes).
Arranged chronologically.
2. Administrative Records. 1904-07. 1.4 cu. ft. (3 boxes).
Arranged by subject. See series 4 for index.
3. Street Progress Reports. 1904-07. 1.7 cu. ft. (4 boxes).
Arranged alphabetically by street names.
4. Alphabetical Index File. 1904-07. 1 reel of microfilm.
Arranged alphabetically.
5. Maps of Burnt District of Baltimore. 1904. 1 reel of microfilm.
No arrangement.

RG 18 Economic Development Corporation (1963-present)

History

The municipal government established the Baltimore City Economic Development Corporation in 1963 as a quasi-public agency to encourage industrial and commercial development. Other duties of the commission included advising the mayor and city council on policies affecting potential economic expansion as well as monitoring the economic growth of the city. The responsibilities of this agency have remained the same with some organizational changes. Originally the agency consisted of ten members, including representatives of the Association of Commerce, Greater Baltimore Committee, Industrial Real Estate Council of Baltimore, Junior Association of Commerce, Steamship Trade Association, Planning Commission, and four members at large; later a representative of the Committee for Downtown, Inc. was added. Since its inception the agency has been headed by a salaried director hired by the corporation members. In 1968, the municipality expanded the membership of the corporation to fifteen. Starting in the late 1960s the agency received funds for the purchase and lease of properties to assist private businesses.

In 1976 the commission merged with the Baltimore Industrial Development Corporation to become the Baltimore Economic Development Corporation - known as BEDCO - under the jurisdiction of the Baltimore City Department of Housing and Community Development (RG 48).

Records Summary

The general administrative records of this agency are available at the archives. Subjects covered are dealings with promotional organizations, interaction with other municipal agencies, public relations, and development projects. The records consist of correspondence and publications.

Series

1. Administrative Files. 1963-83. 9.9 cu. ft. (22 boxes).
File folder listing.
Arranged by subject.

RG 19 Health Department (1798-present)

History

The Baltimore City Health Department has origins back to 1793 when the state authorized appointment of a quarantine physician for the port. A severe outbreak of yellow fever in nearby Philadelphia, coupled with the belief that spoiled ship's cargoes caused the disease, also led to formation of a voluntary committee of health in 1793. Four years later, the newly formed city government established the commissioners of health to take preventive actions against disease. Throughout the nineteenth century this and successor health agencies were concerned with containment of infectious disease, abatement of unsanitary conditions, and other remedial measures.

The administrative history of the department is complex. With the hope of saving money, the municipality merged the commissioners of health with the city commissioners (RG 3) in 1809. Following a serious outbreak of yellow fever in 1819, the city government established a separate health board composed of three commissioners. Another change occurred in 1844 when parsimony led again to the combination of the health board with the city commissioners. This change was short lived, and in 1845 the municipality reestablished the health board as an autonomous agency. In 1898, a new city charter placed a Health Department within the administrative framework of the Department of Public Safety and gave functional authority within the department to a single health commissioner. The most recent major change came about through the 1946 city charter, which made the Health Department a separate agency.

As the municipal government expanded its role during the twentieth century, so did the department. The agency acquired responsibilities such as food inspection, occupational safety, enforcement of housing hygiene, and regulation of environmental quality. Within the last two decades, the department has also come to supervise programs relating to child health, clinics, mental health, and addictions.

Records Summary

The records of the Health Department and its predecessor agencies date back to 1798, but are not comprehensive. Most of the material dates from the nineteenth century and covers many of the department's activities, including ship quarantine procedures; elimination of "nuisances" such as rotting animal or vegetable matter and stagnant water; attempts to prevent and suppress disease; and provision of medical supplies and services. Reports, correspondence, financial information, and minutes make up the bulk of these earlier records. Name indexes have been prepared for two of the most significant report types: coroner inquest reports (1827-67) and interment reports (1834-40).

Records dating from the twentieth century are varied and small in volume. They include some public relations material, administrative reports, and some files from the federally funded Women, Infant Care (WIC) program.

Series

1. HRS Records. 1798-1882. 12.6 cu. ft. (28 boxes). Index. Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.
2. Quarantine Records. 1881-1918. 6 lin. in. (3 vols.). Arranged chronologically.
3. Minutes of the Board of Trustees of the Poor for Baltimore City and County and Board Minutes of Subsequent Agencies. 1833-1935. 2 reels of microfilm. Arranged chronologically.
4. Maps, Charts, and Miscellaneous Items. ca.1930-50. 3 lin. in. (1 folder and 1 vol.). No arrangement.
5. Bureau of Communicable Disease Scrapbooks. 1933, 1936-37. 0.45 cu. ft. (1 box). Arranged chronologically.
6. Commission of Health Weekly Letters to the Mayor. 1965-75. 0.90 cu. ft. (2 boxes).
7. WIC Administrative Chronological Files. 1973-79. 0.45 cu. ft. (1 box).
8. WIC Administrative Subject Files. 1975-80. 1 lin. in. Arranged by subject.
9. House of Industry Records. 1817-23. 0.25 lin. in. Index. Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.
10. Commissioner of Health Correspondence. 1913-15. 6 lin. in. (2 vols.). Arranged chronologically.

RG 20 Fire Department (1862-present)

History

Efforts to prevent and combat fires date back to the earliest days of Baltimore. The first attempt to provide fire protection came in 1747 through a law specifying fines for unsafe chimneys and houses not having ladders that reached to the top of their roofs. The origins of an organized fire department developed with creation of voluntary fire companies - the Mechanical (1763), Union (1782), Friendship (1785), and Deptford (1792).

Until the middle of the nineteenth century, volunteer fire companies provided the chief form of fire protection. Supporting these companies were occasional state and city laws, such as a 1787 act in the Maryland legislature requiring every householder to maintain two leather buckets near the front entrance and a 1799 municipal ordinance prohibiting the erection of wooden dwellings. The municipality also supplied appropriations to the companies for equipment and supplies. By 1834 there were fifteen volunteer companies, and by 1858 twenty-two.

Although the volunteer companies were the only method of fire protection, they hardly constituted a very effective system. They often engaged in fights with each other, and on several occasions these conflicts sparked riots. Moreover, few of the companies were adequately equipped or trained. In 1834 representatives of each of the companies formed the Baltimore United Fire Department to regulate fire protection, but most of the major problems persisted. Twenty-four years later, the municipal government established a professional fire department that has remained in existence to the present, governed by a board of commissioners.

Records Summary

At the time of this writing, the archives has relatively few records of the department. The most significant materials are the service records of about six thousand fire fighters who served from 1862 to 1967 (series 1). Information in the records includes name, residence, date of birth, date leaving service, and occasionally date of death. A name index is available for all individuals listed in the files. Records of fire fighters who are deceased or who entered the service over seventy-five years ago may be viewed without restriction.

Series

1. Service Records. 1862-1967. 3 reels of microfilm. Index. Restricted.
Arranged alphabetically by name.
2. Fire Incendiary Bureau Preliminary and Suspicious Investigation Reports, 1938-present.
Arranged chronologically.
3. Insurance Records. 1874-78. 1.25 lin. in. (1 vol.).
Arranged chronologically.

RG 21 Municipal Museum

History

Baltimore established the Municipal Museum (commonly referred to as the Peale Museum) in 1931 following a public protest against the sale and possible demolition of the old museum building. Constructed in 1814 as the first museum building in the United States, the owner (and artist) Rembrandt Peale originally christened the building the "Baltimore Museum and Gallery of Paintings." The museum survived until 1833 when lack of funds caused the sale and dispersal of its contents. Soon afterward, the municipality acquired the building and used it as a city hall (until 1875), a public school (1876-87), and offices of the water board (1887-1915). In 1915, the facility reverted to private control and was used for business purposes until the city purchased it in 1931. The federal government declared the building a National Historical Landmark in 1966.

Since 1931 the museum has collected paintings, prints, photographs, furniture, and decorative arts related to Baltimore, and sponsored lectures, publications, exhibitions, and other educational programs on the city's history. Starting in the mid-1950s and lasting through the 1960s, the museum was a driving force in the beginning of a historic preservation movement in Baltimore. The museum also operates the Carroll Mansion, the Washington Monument, and the Old Town Meeting House.

Records Summary

With the exception of a small portion of original construction records, the materials in this record group date from the city's establishment of the museum in 1931. Most of the documentation consists of administrative files relating to the daily operation of the facility. Subjects covered are exhibits, acquisitions, publications, historic preservation efforts, public relations, and other administrative activities.

Series

1. Board of Trustees minutes. 1931-present. 0.45 cu. ft. (1 box).
Arranged chronologically.
2. Gifts to the Municipal Museum. 1967-78. 2 reels of microfilm. Restricted.
Arranged by subject.
3. Loans to and from the Municipal Museum. 1969-79. 1 reel of microfilm. Restricted.
Arranged by subject.
4. Administrative Files. 1931-81. 9.45 cu. ft. (21 boxes).
File folder listing.
Arranged alphabetically by subject title.

5. Financial Records. 1933-81. 11.70 cu. ft. (26 boxes).
Arranged by record type and chronologically thereunder.
6. Scrapbooks. 1931-81. 4.05 cu. ft. (9 boxes).
Arranged chronologically.
7. Publicity. 1965-80. 0.20 cu. ft. (0.5 box).
Arranged chronologically.
8. Personnel. 1937-81. 0.65 cu. ft. (1.5 boxes).
Arranged by subject.
9. Women's Committee. 1964-78. 0.65 cu. ft. (1.5 boxes).
Arranged by subject.
10. Individual Personnel Files. 1950-81. 0.65 cu. ft.
(1.5 boxes). Restricted.
Arranged alphabetically by employee's surname.
- 10a. HRS Records. 1830. 0.5 lin. in. Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.
11. Visitor Registers and Tour Group Appointment Books.
1967-78. 0.9 cu. ft. (2 boxes).
Arranged by volume type.

RG 22 War of 1812 Records (1813-14)

History

At the start of the War of 1812, the municipality made plans to defend the city. Mayor Edward Johnson and a number of prominent citizens formed a committee of Vigilance and Safety to direct defensive measures. The committee's chief activity was the acquisition of supplies and equipment for local militia forces. Committee members also supervised the construction or renovation of forts designed to guard approaches to the city.

When the war was over, the committee settled debts associated with the city's defense and started work on a monument (known eventually as the Battle Monument; see MS 3) to commemorate the Battle of North Point. The committee disbanded in 1814.

Records Summary

Most of the items in this record group pertain to the activities of the Committee of Vigilance and Safety, including construction of bulwarks and forts, purchase of munitions, enlistment of volunteers, acquisition of funds. Record types include correspondence, financial materials, muster rolls, and lists of supplies.

Series

1. HRS War of 1812 Records. 1813-14. 4.5 cu. ft. (10 boxes). Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.
2. Pensions. 1820. 0.25 lin. in. Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.
3. War Loan Interest Correspondence. 1826. 0.5 lin. in. Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.

RG 23 Baltimore Emergency Relief Commission/ Citizens Emergency Relief Committee Records (1930-36)

History

In 1931 W. Frank Roberts, president of the Baltimore Chamber of Commerce, called a meeting to discuss the growing unemployment crisis in the city and the lack of funds available to relieve the problem. The mayor, police commissioner, and representatives of the state government, Community Fund of Baltimore, Red Cross, Associated Jewish Charities, and Bureau of Catholic Charities attended the meeting. They formed an executive committee to raise funds, coordinate the activities of the various charity agencies, and distribute funds. Under the title of the Citizens Emergency Relief Committee (CERC), this body functioned in cooperation with the established charity organizations.

By September 1933 it was evident that the private agencies were ill-equipped to deal with the deteriorating unemployment situation. The municipality responded by forming the Baltimore Emergency Relief Commission (BERC) to supplement the work of CERC. BERC administered the distribution of federal funds under the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, and was a subsidy of the Maryland Emergency Relief Administration.

In October 1936, the municipality abolished BERC in response to the discontinuance of federal money and the failure of the state to supply adequate funds. The federal Works Progress Administrative took over many of BERC's former duties. CERC remained in existence until at least 1941, coordinating the activities of the various charity organizations.

Records Summary

Since the records of CERC and BERC were apparently maintained together, the material has been kept in a single record group. The records themselves consist largely of reports issued by the two bodies. Information in the reports is largely financial, including revenue and expenditure accounts, statistical breakdowns, and descriptions of the number and value of surplus food tickets. Also available are some CERC correspondence and minutes dating from 1930 to 1932.

Series

1. Financial Report. 1933-36. 0.5 lin. in. (1 vol.).
Arranged chronologically.
2. Preliminary Reports. 1933-34. 3 lin. in.
Arranged chronologically.
3. Correspondence and Committee Meeting Records. 1932.
2 lin. in.
No arrangement.

RG 24 1964 Charter Revision Commission (1963-65)

History

In 1963, Mayor Theodore R. McKeldin appointed the Charter Revision Commission to consider improvements to the 1946 charter. Chief among the commission's concerns was providing a more adequate vehicle for dealing with the municipality's increasing dependence on outside sources of income. There was also a need to reorganize the city's administrative structure and budgeting procedures. The commission consisted of twenty-four members and was supported by a fifty member advisory committee. The commission first met in September 1963 to form four committees (also known as task forces): structure and organization of principal officers; structure and organization of executive departments; budget, financial and purchasing procedures; and personnel.

The commission proposed the appointment of an assistant mayor; creation of a Department of Personnel; reorganization of the Department of Public Works (RG 47); establishment of a Department of Finance; and alteration of budgeting procedures. Other suggestions included moving election dates from May to November and having elected officials take office in December instead of May.

The commission submitted its final report along with the proposed charter to the mayor in April 1964. Mayor McKeldin endorsed the proposed charter and passed it on to the city council for approval. The council insisted on some changes, most of which the commission agreed to. The final version incorporated all the major recommendations of the commission except the provision for an assistant mayor and establishment of a Department of Personnel. After voter approval of the charter, the commission was formally terminated in July 1964.

Records Summary

These records are the complete files of the commission, including correspondence, minutes, reports, research materials, and charter drafts. All of the commission's activities are covered in detail, including ideas for charter changes, analyses of various components and functions of the municipal government, and responses to proposed amendments.

Series

1. Administrative Files. 1963-64. 0.5 lin. in.
Arranged by subject.
2. Newspaper Articles. 1963-64. 0.5 lin. in.
Arranged chronologically.
3. General Responses to Mayor McKeldin's Letter Requesting Suggestions for Revisions. 1965. 0.5 lin. in.
Arranged chronologically.
4. Committee I - Structure and Organization, Principal Officers. 1963-64. 1.5 lin. in.
Arranged by subject.
5. Committee II - Structure and Organization, Executive Departments. 1963-64. 7 lin. in.
Arranged by subject.
6. Committee III - Budget, Financial, and Purchasing. Procedures. 1963-64. 3 lin. in.
7. Committee IV - Personnel. 1963-64. 0.5 lin. in.
Arranged by subject.
8. Full Commission/Executive Committee. 1963-64. 0.5 lin. in.
Arranged by subject.
9. General Reorganization of the Charter. 1962-64. 1 lin. in.
Arranged chronologically.
10. Final Report of the Commission and Proposed Amended Charter Submitted to the Mayor. 1964. 1 lin. in.
Arranged chronologically.

11. Arthur Committee/Council. 1964. 2 lin. in.
Arranged by subject.
12. Resolution 502 as amended and passed by the City Council.
1964. 1 lin. in.
Arranged chronologically.
13. Successive Drafts of the Charter. 1964. 5 lin. in.
Arranged chronologically.
14. Comprehensive Chronological File. 1963-64. 7 lin. in.
Arranged chronologically.

RG 25 Water Supply Records (1852-1922)

History

Beginning in the 1790s the municipal government attempted to supply fresh water to city residents. This public effort was less than satisfactory, and in 1804 a privately owned water company began operation. From its founding this company generated public disapproval with high rates and insufficient service, problems which ultimately led to a municipal take-over in 1854 and the city's establishment of a water board to administer the service. The board used special loans to fund an assortment of projects designed to extend water service facilities. In the mid-1870s work began on bringing water to the city from the Gunpowder River in Baltimore County. This project was finished in 1881 with completion of reservoirs at Loch Raven and Lake Montebello. Additional facilities were constructed in the 1890s to meet growth in the north and northeast sections of the city; improvements in the southwest section followed a few years later.

By the early twentieth century it was apparent that Baltimore required substantially more water than it was receiving. In 1912 work began on a larger dam at the Loch Raven Reservoir and on construction of a city-wide conduit and filtration system. Additional sources of water were directed into Baltimore from Prettyboy reservoir in 1933.

The water board was an independent agency from its establishment until its placement under the Department of Public Improvements in 1898. With creation of the Department of Public Works (RG 47) in 1925, responsibility for the municipality's water came under a Bureau of Water Supply, an arrangement that continues today.

Records Summary

These records, although not complete, provide a great deal of information about the municipality's effort to bring fresh water into Baltimore. Most of the documentation relates to the administrative operations of the water board and its successor agencies. Among the subjects covered are purchase of the original private water company, acquisition of rights and property, construction and maintenance of water mains and reservoirs, financial operations, planning, and policy formulation. The materials include correspondence, minutes, legal documents, vouchers and payrolls, inventories, personnel records, and some technical documentation.

Series

1. Administrative Files. 1852-1922. 4.5 cu. ft. (10 boxes). Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.
2. Reports of the Extension of Municipal Water Supply to the 1918 Annex. 1921-23. 2 lin. in. Arranged chronologically.
3. Water Engineer Journal. 1903. 2 lin. in. (1 vol.). Arranged chronologically.

RG 26 Baltimore Municipal Journal (1913-31, 1978-82)

History

Mayor James H. Preston established the Baltimore Municipal Journal in 1913 to serve as "an excellent medium for the city's advertising" and a way to supply "the people information as to what is being done by their city government in greater detail than they could obtain from the daily papers." The journal is rich in administrative (especially financial) detail and also contains information on notable personalities, public improvements, commercial enterprises, communities, festivals, and historic preservation efforts. There is no clear reason why the journal was discontinued. Mayor William F. Broenig stated in 1930 that its publication "had been turned over to private interests"; it is possible that the increasing cost of the journal proved to be too great for both the municipal government and private publishers. In late 1978 the Baltimore Journal was started with the purpose of providing an official outlet for the news of city business and advertisements; this revival ended in June 1982.

Records Summary

This collection of the Municipal Journal is complete for both the earlier and the more recent editions. The 1913-31 edition is available only on microfilm. A small collection of photographs used in connection with the publication between 1913 and 1918 is available at the Peale Museum.

Series

1. Baltimore Municipal Journal. 1913-31. 7 reels of microfilm.
Arranged chronologically.
2. Baltimore Municipal Journal Photographs. 1912-18.
67 items.
Arranged by subject. Transferred to the Peale Museum.
3. Baltimore Journal. 1978-82. 0.45 cu. ft. (1 box).
Arranged chronologically.

RG 27 1969 Commission on Amendments to the Baltimore City Charter
(1969-71)

History

In March 1969 Mayor Thomas J. D'Alesandro III appointed a commission to consider revision of the 1964 charter. The ten member commission, chaired by Reuben Oppenheimer, was primarily interested in the relationship of the mayor and policy-making personnel in the executive department, relations between the municipality and its work force, and modernization of the city's personnel practices. The commission also was charged to consider changing municipal elections to an even year starting in 1972 and every four years thereafter. The commission decided to submit individual reports on this and other proposed amendments.

The commission first met in April 1969 to consider the issue of municipal elections. Hearings were held and in July the commission recommended the continuance of existing election practices.

The commission then tackled the municipality's personnel practices. Hearings were held in mid-1969 to consider the views of major city officials and civic labor organizations. In March 1970, the commission issued a tentative report proposing a major reorganization of civil service and the creation of a Department of Personnel. The director of personnel would be a mayoral appointee and the Civil Service Commission (RG 7) would have reduced authority over municipal employment practices. Collective bargaining with public employees was also recommended. A second report issued in April 1970 modified the initial proposal by suggesting that the Civil Service Commission remain a separate and autonomous unit with broadened powers, including the administration of examinations and the adjudication of municipal employee appeals and grievances. This recommendation was subsequently approved by the city council.

The commission also considered labor relations and collective bargaining. In March 1971 the city council referred a proposed resolution amending the charter to provide for a Department of Labor Relations separate from the Civil Service Commission to the charter commission. In April the charter commission recommended against this resolution and suggested instead that the proposed Department of Personnel handle labor relations. Such a department never materialized, and after April 1971 the charter commission's activities effectively ceased.

Records Summary

This record group contains the complete files of the 1969 Commission on Amendments to the Baltimore City Charter. Covered in detail are all of the body's major activities: analyzing municipal electoral, personnel, and labor relations practices; holding public hearings; and reporting on proposed amendments. This information is contained in correspondence, minutes, report drafts, press releases, and research materials.

Series

1. Administrative Files. 1969-71. 0.25 lin. in.
Arranged chronologically.
2. Press Releases and Coverage. 1969-70. 0.25 lin. in.
Arranged chronologically.
3. Miscellaneous Correspondence. 1969-71. 0.25. lin. in.
Arranged chronologically.
4. First Report. 1969. 0.5 lin. in.
Arranged chronologically.
5. Civil Service Commission/Personnel. 1969-70. 4 lin. in.
Arranged by subject.
6. Third Report, Labor Relations/Collective Bargaining.
1969-71. 0.5 lin. in.
Arranged chronologically.
7. Minutes of the Commission. 1969. 0.5 lin. in.
Arranged chronologically.

RG 28 1973 Charter Revision Commission (1973-76)

History

Mayor William Donald Schaefer created the Charter Revision Commission in July 1973. The commission established study groups to examine and report on personnel, the Board of Estimates, and the interrelationship between municipal agencies. The personnel study group held public hearings in late 1973 and early 1974. In April 1974 the commission submitted a final report recommending elimination of the Civil Service Commission (RG 7), creation of a Department of Personnel, and other changes in the charter's personnel sections. A year later the Board of Estimates study group submitted a final report recommending greater accountability in the board's activities and increased power for the city council in the board's decisions. Later in the year, the city departments study group submitted a report recommending some minor administrative changes. These proposals were not officially considered by the municipality until 1976 when they were introduced into the city council. Of the three proposals, only that of the city departments study group was incorporated into the charter.

During the commission's tenure it was also concerned with two lesser issues. In May 1974 the commission submitted a report recommending a thorough revamping of the municipal method for appointment, confirmation, and tenure of top-level bureaucrats on boards and commissions. Council hearings were held in June 1974, and the measure was approved by the voters in November. The Board of Estimates special subcommittee on procurement released their final report in June 1975 recommending revisions to the charter's procurement provisions, but this report was not introduced into the city council. The commission was abolished in February 1976.

Records Summary

These are the complete files of the 1973 Charter Revision Commission. All commission activities are represented, including analyzing municipal procurement, personnel, and administrative practices; studying the Board of Estimates; and issuing recommendations for amendments. Record types include correspondence, minutes, report drafts, press releases, and research materials.

Series

1. Administrative Files. 1973-75. 2.7 cu. ft.
(6 boxes).
Arranged by subject.

RG 29 Department of Legislative Reference (1906-present)

History

The municipality established a city library in 1874 to maintain the city's records and printed reference materials. For the next 50 years, the library's chief activities consisted of collecting information for the municipal government and keeping track of various official documentation. There were also some sporadic attempts to preserve records judged to be of historical value.

In 1906, the state and city created a joint Department of Legislative Reference to assist with legislative activity. Responsibilities of the new body included legal research; preparation of legislation; and the maintenance of reference information.

In 1932, the municipality abolished the city library and transferred its functions to the Department of Legislative Reference. A separate Bureau of Archives, created in 1927, was also placed under the administrative control of the department. The legislative reference library focused its attention on collecting published material relating to Baltimore government, such as newspaper clippings, annual reports, proceedings, and secondary sources. The Bureau of Archives, later renamed the Baltimore City Archives and Records Management Office, assumed responsibility for the city's official records. The joint nature of the department ended in 1966 with establishment of separate legislative reference agencies for the state and city.

Records Summary

These records consist of materials generated through daily administrative activities and also of materials gathered for research purposes. The bulk of the former records date from the mid-1950s and relate for the most part to the City Archives and Records Management Office. Most aspects of the agency's activities are covered, including microfilming, records scheduling and disposition, administration of historical records, and professional organization activities. Record types include correspondence, reports, and financial documentation.

The research materials in this record group consist of a subject file originally maintained by the city library, and later the legislative reference library, from 1906 to 1980. A wide variety of subjects relating to Baltimore history are covered by the materials, which include pamphlets, magazine articles, newspaper clippings, and manuscript and typescript accounts.

Series

1. Subject File. 1840-1980; bulk dates 1910-50. 23.4 cu. ft. (52 boxes). File folder listing. Arranged alphabetically by subject.
2. City Archives Administrative Files. 1947-present. 1.9 cu. ft. (4.25 boxes). File folder listing. Arranged by subject.
3. Records Engineering, Inc. Survey Reports 1953-54. 7.25 lin. in. Arranged by subject.
4. City Library Files. 1891-1910. 0.9 cu. ft. (2 boxes). Arranged chronologically.

RG 30 Electrical Commission (1894-1938)

History

Increased public demand for electrical and telephone services led in the 1880s to a proliferation of above-ground wires and support poles in Baltimore. This system, although regarded as a safety hazard and visually unattractive from its inception, was not improved upon until the Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone Company constructed several underground electrical conduits in the downtown section of the city in 1890. The success of this effort, coupled with the overburdening of the above-ground system, encouraged the city council in 1894 to appoint a commission "to study the problems which presented themselves in the execution of an efficient system of subways [electrical conduits]."

Based upon the recommendations of the commission, the municipal government decided to construct and maintain an extensive network of subsurface electrical and gas conduits. The city successfully petitioned the state in 1896 for permission to float a \$1 million bond issue to finance the project. In 1898 the municipality established the Electrical Commission to supervise placement of all wires in underground conduits and to gather information concerning the type, length, and distribution of wires. After some preliminary planning, the commission started a massive conduit construction program. Progress increased each year until 1918 when much of the work was complete.

The commission was initially under the administration of the Department of Public Improvements. In 1927 it was reorganized as the Bureau of Mechanical-Electrical Services and placed under the Department of Public Works (RG 47). In 1967 the responsibility for electrical conduits shifted to the Bureau of Engineering, another subdivision of the Department of Public Works.

Records Summary

The records of the Electrical Commission relate primarily to administrative and operational activities. Administrative materials cover such subjects as inter-agency cooperation in the construction and use of conduits; negotiations with private companies; construction details; inquiries from individuals and other municipalities about the commission's work; and legal matters. Operational records deal with such topics as duct space applications; financial accounting; personnel; acquisition of material and equipment; permit applications; and specifications. Correspondence, ledgers, forms, legal documents, and drawings comprise most of the record types. Most of the material dates from 1900 to 1914, which was the period of the commission's greatest activity. While some series appear to be complete, there are gaps in many places.

Series

1. HRS Records. 1900-38. 7.2 cu. ft. (16 boxes). Index. Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.
2. Electrical Commission Letterbooks. 1899-1914. 4.3 lin. in. (25 vols.). Arranged chronologically.
3. Chief Engineer Administrative Files. 1920. 0.9 cu. ft. (2 boxes). Arranged alphabetically by subject.
4. Miscellaneous Electrical Commission Records. 1900-14. 3 lin. in. No arrangement.
5. Personnel Records. 1900-12. 1.3 lin. ft. (200 items, 15 vols., and 1 reel of microfilm). Arranged by record type.
6. Financial Records. 1898-1914. 1.5 lin. ft. (8 vols.). Arranged by record type.
7. Supply Orders. 1898-1914. 2.5 lin. ft. (15 vols.). Arranged chronologically.
8. Paving Orders. 1906-14. 4 lin. in. (2 vols.). Arranged chronologically.
9. Permits. 1904, 1910. 4 lin. in. (2 vols.). Arranged chronologically.
10. Specifications. ca.1899-1902. 2 lin. in. (1 vol.). No arrangement.
11. Conduit Sketches, Blueprints, and Plats. ca.1899-1915. 1 reel of microfilm. Index. Arranged by record type.

12. Electrical Subway Commission Records. 1894-97. 6 lin. in. (4 vols.).
Arranged by record type.
13. Municipal Lighting Commission Records. 1900-05. 5 lin. in.
Arranged by record type and thereunder by subject.
14. Sewerage Commission Records. 1902-08. 1.5 lin. in.
Arranged by record type.
15. Photographs. ca.1909. 45 items. Transferred to the Peale Museum.
No arrangement.
16. Published Reports. 1895-1905. (1 vol.).
Arranged chronologically.

RG 31 Department of Education (1829-1972)

History

The origins of the Baltimore public schools go back to 1826 when the state authorized establishment of a municipally funded educational system. The city created a Board of School Commissioners in 1828 and began operation of four schools the next year. Supervision of these and subsequent schools was the responsibility of the board. Among the board's specific duties were administration of curricula, teaching methods, personnel, buildings, and supplies. During the early years of the school system, the board directly handled most functions. With the number of schools steadily increasing, the board decided in 1866 to hire a Superintendent of Public Instruction.

A number of changes affected the public schools during the latter half of the nineteenth century. In 1867, the municipality established a separate school system for blacks, and in 1884 the board created several manual training schools to teach vocational skills. Toward the end of the century, the board, whose members were elected officials, was rendered ineffective due to political controversy. In 1898, a municipal charter committee addressed these problems and determined the best solution would be to have the mayor appoint board members. It was also decided at this point to place the board at the head of a Department of Education. This arrangement remains in effect today.

Records Summary

These records consist largely of materials generated and maintained by the Board of School Commissioners. Many of the board's functions are reflected in the records, including decisions about curricula and texts; hiring, disciplining, and firing of teachers; acquisition of school buildings; and general policy and planning activities. The most significant information is contained in the board's minutes. A variety of reports and directories are also useful. Most of the remaining material is, however, very incomplete.

The archives has few records from individual schools. There is some limited and unindexed information about pre-1900 students. Data concerning teachers is for the most part limited to pre-1907 directory listings.

Series

1. Board of School Commissioners Records.
 - A. Minutes. 1836-1972. 4.5 lin. ft. (30 vols.);
4 cu. ft. (73 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
 - B. Annual Reports. 1849-1981. 3 cu. ft. (40 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
 - C. Committee Records. 1895-96, 1914-18, 1940-46. 5 vols.
0.5 lin. ft. (5 vols.).
Arranged by record type.
 - D. Circulars. 1897-1900. 1.5 lin. in. (1 vol.).
Arranged chronologically.
 - E. Rules of Order. 1872-1963. 0.5 lin. ft. (18 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
 - F. Public School Directory. 1871-1967. 0.5 cu. ft.
(99 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
 - G. Song Book. ca.1830s. 0.5 lin. in. (1 vol.).
 - H. Petitions. 1928. 1 item.
 - J. President's Papers. 1947-53. 0.45 cu. ft.
(20 folders).
Arranged by subject.
 - K. Film: "Free Schools: The Hope of Democracy."
ca.1950s. 2 reels of microfilm.
 - L. New Dimensions in School Board Leadership. 1969. 1 vol.

- M. History. ca.1959. 1 item.
- N. City College Commission Minutes. 1896-99.
0.5 lin. in. (1 vol.).
- 2. Superintendent of Public Instruction.
 - A. Superintendent Charles J. Koch Papers. 1916-20.
2 folders.
Arranged chronologically.
 - B. Superintendent Henry S. West Papers. 1919-25.
15 folders.
Arranged chronologically.
 - C. Superintendent David E. Waglein Papers. 1929-44.
8 folders.
Arranged chronologically.
 - D. Auditorium Seating Charts. 1933-50s. 1 folder.
Arranged chronologically.
- 3. Personnel Records.
 - A. Eligibility Lists. 1883-98, 1904-08. 7 lin. in.
(5 vols.).
Arranged by record type.
 - B. Election/Promotion Records. 1875-1923. 4.5 lin. in.
(2 vols.).
Arranged by record type.
 - C. Employee Lists. 1890-1915. 4.5 lin. in. (4 vols.).
Arranged by record type.
 - D. Disciplinary Records. 9.5 lin in. (14 vols.,
2 folders). Restricted.
Arranged by record type.
 - E. Teacher Mutual Benefit Association. 1896-1936.
0.5 lin. in. (1 vol.).
 - F. Payroll Records. 1869-71. 1.3 cu. ft. (3 boxes).
Arranged chronologically.
- 4. Individual School Records.
 - A. [Woodberry School]. 1899-1906. 5 vols. 2 lin. in.
(5 vols.).
Arranged by record type.
 - B. English-German School No. 6. 1888-98. 1 lin. in.
(1 vol.).

- C. Western High School. 1944. 1 lin. in. (1 vol., 1 folder).
Arranged by record type.
- D. Unidentified School. 1846-73. 1.5 lin. in. (1 vol.).
- E. [Male] High School. 1845-50. 0.5 lin. in. (1 vol.).
- 5. Division of Physical Plant.
 - A. Deeded Lots. 1830-76. 2 lin. in. (1 vol.).
 - B. Building Specifications. 1929-36, 1942, 1966.
4 cu. ft. (47 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
 - C. Photographs. 1936, 1956, n.d. 1 lin. in. (1 vol.).
 - D. Plats and Drawings of School Buildings. Pre-1946.
26 reels of microfilm.
Arranged by school number.
- 6. Maps.
 - A. Map of School System. 1932 (rev. 1944). 1 item.
 - B. Geographic Distribution of Enrollment of the Boy's Vocational School as of March 1934. 1 item.
- 7. Instructional Divisional Records.
 - A. Radio and Television. 1940s-73.
- 8. Office of Science.
 - A. Elra M. Palmer Memorial Scholarship Fund Agreement. 1981. 1 item.
- 9. Published Materials. 1925-82. 2.5 cu. ft. (2.5 boxes).
File folder listing.
Arranged topically.

RG 32 Register (1797-1965)

History

The City Register's office, among the first created by the municipal government after incorporation in 1796, was originally responsible for records maintenance and financial management. By the 1820s, the establishment of a funded debt through loans and stock emissions made the register's duties more complex. Responsibility for the expanding funded debt lay with the Commissioners of Finance, but the register was charged with its functional management, which included record keeping and account audits, collections, and payments.

As the size and intricacy of Baltimore's financial affairs grew, it became necessary to develop additional means of administration. In 1857, the comptroller (RG 43) was established to audit and settle all municipal accounts. The register continued to maintain the city's records and to serve as custodian of city funds. A further attempt to equalize the burden of administering Baltimore's financial machinery came in 1874 when the city created the city librarian's office (see RG29) to keep all municipal records except those pertaining to the public debt, which the register continued to maintain.

The duties of the register remained stable until 1946 when the office was abolished by a revised municipal charter. Responsibility for keeping records of the public debt and for custody of municipal funds and securities was vested in the Department of the Treasurer, an office that was merged into the Department of Finance in 1980.

Records Summary

The great majority of items in this record group are municipal stock and loan records dating from around 1800 to 1920. A variety of public improvement projects are covered, including railroads, canals, harbor ship channels, water supply, paving, schools, burnt district recovery, sewers, and Jones Falls containment. Also present in large numbers are the general financial accounts of the municipality. This information is contained in bound volumes usually identified either as ledgers, journals, or cash books. The Civil War Bounty and Relief Records (series 11) relate to city and state efforts to acquire military recruits and provide relief for soldier's families (see RG 56 for related material). The Civil War records have no orderly arrangement and are not indexed.

Series

1. HRS Indexed Records. 1800-1924. 47 cu. ft. (104 boxes).
Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.
2. Stock and Loan Records. 1817-1965. 40 lin. ft.
(244 vols.). Item listing.
Arranged by subject.
3. Ledgers. 1797-1914. 13.5 lin. ft. (58 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
4. Cash Books. 1799-1914. 16 lin. ft. (65 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
5. Journals. 1856-76. 2 lin. ft. (11 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
6. Index to the City Debt. 1884-1910. 2.5 lin. ft.
(8 vols.).
Arranged chronologically and thereunder alphabetically.

7. License, Fine, and Fee Accounts. 1837-48, 1853-56.
6.5 lin. ft. (4 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
8. Annual Summaries of Municipal Revenue and Expenditures.
1797-1839. 1 reel of microfilm.
Arranged chronologically.
9. Daily Cash Record Sheets. 1926-51. 2.5 lin. ft.
(15 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
10. Petty Cash Books. 1918-22, 1946-55. 3 lin. in. (2 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
11. Civil War Bounty and Relief Records. 1862-67. 6.2 lin. ft.
(57 vols.).
Arranged by record type.
12. Newspaper Clippings. 1824-45. 1 lin. in. (1 vol.).
Arranged chronologically.
13. Register Correspondence with City Solicitor. 1877-1904.
17 items (located in box 106 of series 1).
Arranged chronologically.
14. Assorted Financial Records. 1837-1909. 10 lin. in.
(12 vols.).
Arranged by record type.
15. Commissioners of Finance Records. 1828-1963. 9.3 lin. ft.
(48 vols.).
Arranged by record type.

RG 33 Redevelopment Commission (1945-56)

History

The Baltimore Redevelopment Commission's functions were to identify slum areas, negotiate with the federal government for funds, select private builders, relocate displaced tenants, demolish existing structures, restructure streets and utilities, and assist private builders to acquire sites. As originally constituted, the commission consisted of five members appointed by the mayor and confirmed by the city council; membership was increased to seven in 1955. The following year the commission was abolished and its duties assumed by the Baltimore Urban Renewal and Housing Agency (see RG 48).

Records Summary

The commission records held by the archives are administrative in nature. Included are minutes, reports, correspondence, and agreements. All aspects of the commission's work are treated in the materials, although the level of detail varies.

Series

1. Administrative Records. 1945-56. 1.45 cu. ft. (2 boxes). Arranged chronologically.

RG 34 Public Bath Commission (1949-59)

History

Baltimore was one of the first American cities to provide public baths. In 1894, the municipality created the Public Bath Commission to maintain three bathing shores. The commission was able to enlist the support of Henry Walters who, in 1899, donated \$50,000 to build two permanent bathing houses, the first of which opened in 1900. Walters also built three more houses, the last in 1922. In 1900, the mayor appointed a seven man commission to oversee the operation of the bath houses and the city's public comfort stations. In 1916, the commission built the first bath in a public school, which led to the inclusion of bathing facilities in all new schools after 1924.

By 1939 the commission maintained free bathing in six houses and twenty-seven public schools. It also operated fourteen portable showers during the summer months. For a nominal fee of five cents, a bather was entitled to a bar of soap, a towel, and a hot bath or shower. Laundry rooms outfitted with tubs and drying racks were located at several bathhouses. By 1953 the commission also supervised several outdoor swimming pools.

Attendance at the baths began to decline in the early 1950s. The need for public baths was diminished by slum removal projects and new housing regulations of the health department that required a bathtub or shower in every dwelling unit by January 1, 1956. The commission was attacked by the Commission on Government Efficiency and Economy in 1957, and two years later it was abolished. The school bath program continued under the Department of Education (RG 31).

Records Summary

Few records are available for the Public Bath Commission. The attendance records (series 1) consist of statistical information and a few notations. The cash book (series 2) has statistical information about the commission's finances.

Series

1. Attendance Records. 1949-59. 3 lin. in. (3 vols.). Arranged chronologically.
2. Cash Book. 1956-59. 2 lin. in. (1 vol.). Arranged chronologically.

RG35 Contracts and Bonds (1907-present)

History

Since its inception the municipal government has contracted for various types of work. In the early years, the majority of contracts were for upkeep of streets and construction of city buildings. Until 1858 contracts were awarded by the city officials in charge of the work, who usually were specially-appointed commissioners. A more formal process was instituted in 1858 whereby city officers advertised for sealed proposals for public work; these proposals were opened at a public meeting and the contracts awarded to the lowest responsible bidder. This system has remained essentially the same up to the present. From 1900 until 1947 proposals were opened and contracts awarded by a Board of Awards (RG 37). After the Board of Awards was abolished in 1947, the Board of Estimates (RG 36) assumed this function, which it continues today.

Records Summary

There are few contract records dating prior to 1907. What does exist is scattered throughout the records of various agencies (the archives HRS index may be of some help in locating these materials). Contract records dating from 1907 to the present are more complete and these materials comprise this record group. Most of the contracts from 1907 to 1924 concern street paving and sewer construction, although construction of schools, markets, bridges, and other public buildings also is covered. These materials are indexed under the agency doing the work. Contracts and bonds dating from 1925 to the present relate mostly to structural construction or alteration. Other contract types cover supplies, equipment, and building rehabilitation.

Series

1. Contracts and Bonds. 1907-present. 191 cu. ft.
(191 boxes). Item listing.
Arranged chronologically.
2. Contract Ledger Cards. 1922-75. 14 reels of microfilm.
Arranged alphabetically.

RG36 Board of Estimates (1900-present)

History

The 1898 municipal charter established the Board of Estimates and the body's first meeting took place in 1900. While the composition of the board has changed over the years, its two main functions - preparing the annual budget and supervising the city's income and expenditures - have remained the same. (Present members of the board are the mayor, city council president, director of public works, solicitor, and comptroller).

The major function of the board is to prepare the annual municipal budget, which is officially known as the ordinance of estimates. Related functions include estimating amounts needed for capital improvements and determining municipal income from licenses, fees, and taxes. Closely associated with budget preparation is the board's responsibility to oversee municipal spending. The primary activity in this regard is awarding bids valued at over \$5,000.

Records Summary

A fairly comprehensive group of records is available for the Board of Estimates. Most of the body's major activities are treated in detail. The minutes (series 1) are the most informative source of information.

Series

1. Minutes. 1900-present. 72 reels of microfilm.
Arranged chronologically.
2. Meetings, tapes. 1970-present. 5 cu. ft.
(351 cassettes).
Arranged chronologically.
3. Administrative Files. 1940-present. 121 cu. ft.
(121 boxes). File folder listing.
Arranged alphabetically within each year.
4. Agendas. 1971-current. 4 cu. ft. (4 boxes).
Arranged chronologically.
5. Official Record of Appropriations. 1915-17, 1922-23,
1928-29, 1933, 1944-57, 1961. 6.75 lin. ft. (25 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
6. HRS Indexed Records. 1900-23. 1.4 cu. ft. (3 boxes).
Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.

RG37 Board of Awards (1900-46)

History

During the nineteenth century, the municipality used semi-formal committees composed of various officials to review bids and award contracts (see RG 35). To bring uniformity to contract awarding, the 1898 city charter established the Board of Awards. The board consisted of the mayor, comptroller, register, solicitor, and city council president. The board was responsible for awarding contracts for expenditures exceeding \$500 to the lowest responsible bidder. In 1947, the body was abolished and its duties transferred to the Board of Estimates (RG 36).

Records Summary

Minutes (series 1) are the only records available for the Board of Awards. The material covers the board's activities in a succinct fashion. A separate set of minutes (series 2) is an incomplete record produced by a semi-formal contract awards committee during 1869-70.

Series

1. Minutes. 1900-46. 18 reels of microfilm.
Arranged chronologically.
2. Pre-Board of Award Bid Panel Minutes. 1869-70. 1 lin in.
(1 vol.).
Arranged chronologically.

RG38 Civil Defense Records (1941-78)

History

Organized civil defense activities began in Baltimore during December 1941 with creation of the Baltimore Committee on Civilian Defense. The purpose of the committee was to plan for the safety of Baltimore residents in case of an enemy attack. To carry out this plan the committee operated four divisions: planning, public relations, enrollment, and training. Projects included running test blackouts and training air wardens, auxiliary police and firemen, fire watchers, medical corps, messengers, and decontamination squads. The committee also maintained a warning center to monitor information about possible enemy attacks.

In 1945, the state enacted the Maryland Civil Defense Act, which called for the establishment of state and local civil defense agencies. The municipality created the Baltimore Civil Defense Organization in 1951 under this act. Initial activities of the organization centered around preparations for atomic attack. Planning areas included fire control, rescue and medical services, transportation, communication, shelters, and provision of emergency food and water supplies. The organization also devised an elaborate system to train volunteers for use in the event of an emergency. To educate the public about civil defense concepts, the organization conducted an extensive publicity campaign.

In 1963, the municipal government sharply reduced the budget and operational scope of civil defense operations in Baltimore. The Civil Defense Organization was abolished and its functions transferred to the fire department. Municipal authorities relieved the fire department of this responsibility in 1968 by establishing the present Office of Disaster Control and Civil Defense. The primary responsibility of the new agency was to develop an operational survival plan to provide for a continuation of municipal services in the event of a nuclear attack or natural disaster.

Records Summary

This record group consists of material generated by the Baltimore Committee on Civilian Defense (series 1) and the present Office of Disaster Control and Civil Defense (series 2). The first series consists of the files of the Director of Public Relations, which cover most aspects of the committee's work. The second series consists of central administrative files, which are comprehensive in their treatment of the agency's activity. Both series contain correspondence, press releases, minutes, reports, and publications.

Series

1. Baltimore Committee on Civilian Defense, Public Relations Division Files. 1941-45. 4.5 cu. ft. (10 boxes).
File folder listing.
Arranged by subject.
2. Office of Disaster Control and Civil Defense, Administrative Files. 1950-78. 3.65 cu. ft. (9 boxes).
File folder listing.
Arranged by subject.

RG39 Harbor Records

History

One of the early governmental bodies established in Baltimore was a Board of Port Wardens. The state government created the port wardens to exercise supervisory authority over the town's harbor and wharves. Soon after Baltimore's incorporation, the municipality replaced the port wardens with an Office of Harbor Master. This office was to preserve the navigability of the harbor, supervise the mooring of vessels, collect all wharfages and fees, and maintain the city's wharves and docks. In 1813 the Board of Port Wardens was revived and two harbor masters - one for the east side of Jones' Falls and one for the west - were placed under its authority.

Believing the municipal government was becoming both too large and too expensive, the mayor and city council in 1820 combined the port wardens and the city commissioners (RG 3) into one agency. This arrangement lasted until 1850 when a single port warden was established apart from the city commissioners. Another attempt to streamline the city government in 1861 led to combination of the commissioners and port wardens for three years. In 1876 the port warden's office was abolished and its duties, including authority over the harbor master, were transferred to an unsalaried Harbor Board. This action was taken in hopes of improving the agency's services, which had declined because of excessive interference from partisan politics.

The 1898 city charter placed the Harbor Board under the administration of the new Department of Public Improvements. Duties of the board were narrowed to the point where it was only to superintend the physical maintenance and improvement of the harbor, wharves, and docks. A harbor engineer was assigned administrative responsibility over these activities. The harbor master was placed under the comptroller's office (RG 43) and given responsibility to collect wharfages and fees, designate berths for visiting vessels, and insure the general orderliness of the harbor area.

In 1926 a charter amendment abolished the Harbor Board, created a Bureau of Harbors under the new Department of Public Works, and retained the harbor engineer as head of the new bureau. The 1964 charter abolished the Bureau of Harbors. The harbor engineer, however, continued his duties within the Department of Public Works.

Records Summary

This record group consists of varied materials that relate primarily to dredging, but also cover charges for wharfage and tonnage, harbor planning and surveying, and administrative matters. Record types include ledgers, bills, receipts, correspondence, reports, specifications, and printed material. The items in this record group were brought together from scattered locations. The records are also very incomplete and cover only a portion of harbor related activity.

Series

1. Financial Records. 1813-76. 1.6 lin. ft. (14 vols.). Arranged by record type.
2. HRS Indexed Records. 1797-1901. 1.8 cu. ft. (4 boxes). Index. Arranged sequentially by assigned number.
3. Monthly Reports. 1853-65. 2 lin. in. (3 vols.). Arranged chronologically.
4. Printed Material. 1916-51. 4 lin. in. (8 vols.). Arranged chronologically.
5. Lewis Brantz Harbor Survey. 1822. 1 lin. in. (1 vol.).

RG40 Collector (1797-1898)

History

The office of City Collector has roots back to 1782 when the state government authorized the special commissioners (RG 1, RG 2) to appoint a person to collect taxes. After incorporation in 1796, the municipal government made no provision for a permanent tax collector, but appointed individuals to receive city and state levies as needed. By the early years of the nineteenth century the practice was to appoint the same person as collector on a yearly basis. Finally, in 1812, the collector became a permanent city position.

The early collectors worked on a commission basis, receiving six to eight percent of all taxes gathered in return for assuming personal responsibility for what was owed. Arrearages were a problem; the city council often was forced to extend the collection period, or to relieve the collector from responsibility for delinquent taxes. In an attempt to expedite collections, the municipality declared in 1840 that all taxes were due strictly within one year of assessment. The next year the collector was allowed to seize and sell property of delinquent taxpayers.

The duties of the collector remained essentially the same until 1898 when the office was placed under the Department of Finance by a new city charter. In 1949, the municipality abolished the collector's office and transferred the function to the Department of the Treasurer. Collection of taxes was transferred again by the 1964 charter to a Bureau of Collections in the Department of Finance. This arrangement is presently still in effect.

Records Summary

The records of the collector are principally financial accounts of taxes owed and paid. Much of the information relates to real estate and taxation, but there are also references to personal property and income assessments. The City Tax Accounts (series 1) are closely related to the Tax Books (RG4 S1) and provide page references to these items. This record group was formed by gathering previously scattered materials together, and there is a noticeable lack of uniformity among the series. The records are largely incomplete.

Series

1. City Tax Accounts. 1814-60. 4.5 lin. ft. (28 vols.). Arranged chronologically.
2. Accounts of Taxes Collected. 1798-1852. 4 lin. in. (3 vols.). Arranged by record type.
3. Income Tax Assessments. 1842. 2 lin. in. (3 vols.). Arranged by ward and alphabetically thereunder.

4. List of Taxables. 1797. 0.25 lin. in. (1 vol.).
Arranged alphabetically.
5. Accounts of Taxes Owed. 1804-48. 6 lin. in. (3 vols.).
Arranged by year and alphabetically thereunder.
6. City Expenditures Covered by Tax Levies. 1873-82, 1889-98.
4 lin. in. (2 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
7. Miscellaneous Correspondence and Reports. 1842-43, 1848-49.
0.25 lin. in. Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.

RG41 Reports, Returns, Bonds, Bills, Checks, Vouchers, Payrolls, and
Miscellaneous Administrative Records (1797-1939)

History

The materials in record group 41 owe their arrangement to the Historical Records Survey (HRS). It is difficult to determine just how much rearranging the HRS did to the material; most likely at least some of the records were already in the order that persists today. Other records may well have been gathered together from individual groups. In any event, the HRS formed separate groupings by record type for each year and individually indexed each item. To preserve the utility of the index, the material has been left as the HRS arranged it.

The 1796 Baltimore Charter directed the head of each municipal department to submit a report (also known as a return) on a regular (usually monthly) basis to the mayor and city council. This practice appears to have been followed by some agencies on a fairly regular basis throughout the nineteenth century. The mayor and city council also seem to have taken responsibility for reviewing bonds (documents certifying payment for proper performance of obligations).

The financial records such as bills, checks, vouchers, and payrolls conceivably could have been gathered by the register (RG32), who could also have maintained municipal insurance policies. The court papers likely were at one time kept either by the courts or by the city's legal representative. The miscellaneous administrative records are of uncertain origin and most likely had no order until arranged by the HRS.

Records Summary

This is an artificial record group, created to bring together documents representing routine functions of the municipal government. The Reports and Returns (series 1) are extensive and include information about food, wood, turpentine, and other inspections; arrests; administrative functions of assorted agencies; market stall rentals; and refuse collections. Bonds (series 2) cover the activity of certain city employees; licensing of auctioneers, pawn brokers, and operators of gaming tables; provision of goods and services; and financial transactions between the municipality and private parties.

Bills, vouchers, checks, and payrolls (series 3) represent routine municipal financial transactions. Insurance policies (series 4) are mostly for fire and equipment loss protection. Court records (series 5) pertain to the municipal government as well as private parties and consist of arrest warrants, promissory notes, docket extracts, liens, reports, and correspondence. Miscellaneous administrative papers (series 6) consist of a wide variety of items, including correspondence, reports, legal documents, minutes, publications, and tax bills.

Series

1. Reports and Returns. 1798-1925. 59.3 cu. ft. (134 boxes). Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned number.
2. Bonds. 1807-1939. 4.05 cu. ft. (9 boxes). Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.
3. Bills, Vouchers, Checks, and Payrolls. 1811-1923. 54 cu. ft. (120 boxes). Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.
4. Insurance Policies. 1825-1917. 0.9 cu. ft. (2 boxes). Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned number.
5. Court Records. 1815-1921. 1.35 cu. ft. (3 boxes). Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.
6. Miscellaneous Administrative Papers. 1807-1927. 0.9 cu. ft. (2 boxes). Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.

RG42 Market Records (1819-1955)

History

The market system began in 1747 when the state government authorized the Baltimore Town Commissioners (RG1, RG2) to hold and regulate annual fairs. In 1765 the state also authorized the commissioners to appoint a clerk for each market to collect rents, fines, and other revenue. The 1796 municipal charter gave the mayor and city council the power "to erect and regulate markets" and the new city government continued the system of market clerks. It appears that the register (RG32) maintained the revenue records of the markets from 1797 until the creation of the comptroller's office in 1857. The comptroller administered the markets until 1983 when the mayor assumed control over them.

Records Summary

The records largely consist of rent and license materials. Within these categories are financial records and reports, each of which were prepared by the clerks of the various markets. Routine in nature, the records contain little more than the name of the licensee and the amount of the rent or fee. These materials are reasonably complete, although gaps do exist.

Series

1. Market rents and licenses. 1818-1955. 9.45 cu. ft. (55 vols. and 2 reels of microfilm). File folder listing. Arranged chronologically.
2. Market reports and returns. 1842-44, 1854-55, 1917. 0.9 cu. ft. (5 vols.). Index. Arranged chronologically.
3. Centre Market Commission Minutes. 1904-08. 0.5 lin. in. (1 vol.). Arranged chronologically.

RG43 Comptroller

History

The city created the City Comptroller's office in 1857 to examine, audit, and settle all accounts in which the municipality was a debtor or creditor. Much of this responsibility had formerly been exercised by the register (RG32), collector (RG40), and auditor (RG6). Other duties of the comptroller included issuing licenses for markets, wagons, and theaters. In 1898, a new city charter placed the comptroller under a Department of Finance. The comptroller's office was also changed from an appointive to an elective position. A reorganization of the municipal government in 1926 led to transfer of the comptroller's auditing responsibility to a separate and newly established auditor's office. At the same time, the comptroller was given control of the municipal telephone exchange as well as authority for handling the acquisition and sale of all municipally owned real estate. Authority over the harbor and the harbor master's office also was given to the comptroller at this point.

Another series of changes in the comptroller's office occurred in 1964 with adoption of a new municipal charter. The chief alterations were placement of the auditor's office under the authority of the comptroller and creation of a Department of Real Estate under the comptroller. The latter change reflected an increase in the comptroller's responsibility for administering the acquisition and sale of municipal real estate.

Records Summary

The comptroller's records are mostly financial in nature and relate largely to pre-1926 auditing activity. Much of the material appears to be complete. There is some similarity between these materials and those of the register. A group of land records (series 6), consisting of indexes to deeds for municipal real estate and tax sale properties, are also available.

Series

1. Journals. 1857-1923. 14 lin. ft. (65 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
2. Ledgers. 1857-1920. 10 lin. ft. (47 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
3. Cash Books. 1887-1923. 5.5 lin. ft. (26 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
4. Monthly Statements. 1925-51. 1 lin. ft. (9 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
5. Appropriations Ledgers. 1876-90, 1920-28. 1 lin. ft.
(5 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.

6. Land Records. 1854-1926. 1.2 lin. ft. (7 vols. and 4 reels of microfilm).
Arranged chronologically.
7. HRS Indexed Records. 1905-24. 0.45 cu. ft. (1 box).
Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.

RG44 Municipal Harbor Belt Railroad (1913-66)

History

The city government constructed the Municipal Harbor Belt Railroad on the perimeter of the upper harbor for hauling freight between businesses and the trunk lines of the Baltimore and Ohio, Western Maryland, and Pennsylvania railroads. The line extended a distance of 3.57 miles from a former connection with the Pennsylvania Railroad on Aliceanna Street to a connection with the Baltimore and Ohio and the Western Maryland railroads on McComas Street. From this main track, numerous spurs extended onto the property of various companies such as McCormick Spice and Bethlehem Steel.

In 1913 the Board of Estimates authorized construction of the first section of the railroad, a single track on Key Highway from Lawrence to Light Streets. This section was completed in 1915 and construction on sections two and three (down Light Street to Pratt, Pratt to East Falls Avenue, and East Falls to Aliceanna Street) began. The Baltimore and Ohio took over formal operation of each section as it was opened to traffic, although the city was responsible for the actual construction. The railroad was completed in 1918.

In 1921 Mayor William F. Broening solicited suggestions for an operating plan for the facility from executives of the Baltimore and Ohio, Western Maryland, and Pennsylvania railroads. It was reported that the line could not be run at a profit by either the railroads or the city, that the streets traversed by the railroad were too congested, and the the curves in the track were too steep for standard railroad equipment. However, a connection was made with the Western Maryland railroad and a ninety-day operating test undertaken with a committee of four: the city highways engineer and one representative from each of the three railroads. The committee supervised the lines operation, the railroads paid the operating costs, and the city funded the maintenance charges. This "experiment" lasted until the summer of 1946 when the three carriers assumed responsibility for both operation and maintenance of the railroad, with the Baltimore and Ohio serving as the agent for the other two roads. Under the terms of a 1946 agreement, the city retained ownership of the line, but the three roads gained the right to rehabilitate, maintain, use, and operate the railroad.

In 1973 the ends of the line (Pratt to President Street and north of McCormick Company) were abandoned. But the Riverside Yard (Fort and Lawrence Streets) to the McCormick section is still in operation at the present time, under the control of the Chessie System.

Records Summary

While the volume of this record group is small, the information provided is significant. Most aspects of the railroad's operation are covered, including construction details, operating agreements, track leasing, financial accounting, and establishing spur lines to businesses. Record types found are correspondence, legal documents, financial records, minutes, and working papers.

Series

1. General Files. 1913-66. 1 lin. in.
Arranged chronologically.
2. Operating Statements. 1921-44. 1.5 lin. in.
Arranged chronologically.
3. Operating Committee Records. 1921-26. 0.25 lin. in.
Arranged chronologically.
4. Agreements with Railroads for Operation. 1944-49.
0.5 lin. in.
Arranged chronologically.
5. Spur Tracks to Various Business Establishments. 1913-65.
1.5 lin. in. File folder listing.
Arranged topically.

RG45 Jones' Falls Commission (1882-86)

History

The disastrous flood of July 24, 1868 inspired the eventual formation of the Jones' Falls Commission. In that year the municipality created a joint select committee, composed of members of both branches of the city council (RG16), the city commissioners (RG3), and private engineers, to develop a plan of improvement. This committee presented two alternatives -- to divert the course of the Jones' Falls or to make adjustments in the stream, replace bridges, and construct retaining walls.

The city council also formed committees to consider proposals for work on the Jones' Falls, but no plan of any kind was adopted until 1870. In that year, a plan submitted by a recently established Board of Commissioners for the Improvement of Jones' Falls was tentatively adopted. But this plan was not put into effect and the city created a separate commission to examine plans for the Jones' Falls improvement in 1871. In 1874 the mayor and city commissioners assumed the task of formulating a plan. This action appears to have created the Jones' Falls Commission, which oversaw dredging, constructing of retaining walls and bridges, and straightening of curves. Construction activity seems to have all but ceased by 1887 although dredging work still continued. This dredging was eventually taken over by the harbor board (see RG39) about 1890, apparently at the suggestion of Mayor Robert C. Davidson. At this point, the commission appears to have ceased to function.

Records Summary

The records of the Jones' Falls Commission are very incomplete. Consisting of a single volume, the information appears to have been created and gathered by the commission's secretary. Some details are provided about technical specifications and construction work. Included are minutes, reports, agreements, and inventories.

Series

1. Minutes and Proceedings. 1882-86. 2 lin. in. (1 vol.). Arranged chronologically.

RG46 Harlem Park Commission (1874)

History

In 1868 the municipality accepted a ten acre section of the estate of the late Dr. Thomas Edmondson (or Edmundson), which was to be called Harlem Square after the Doctor's country home ("Harlem" or "Haarlem"). The mayor designated the land for park use and appointed a three member commission to supervise it in 1874. After 1874 commission membership changed frequently, sometimes even on a yearly basis.

The commissioners supervised improvement of the land, work of its keeper (a position established in 1872), and condition of the grounds. The commissioners had the power to direct expenditures "for preservation and adornment" and to hire any laborers they felt were needed to maintain the park. Under terms of the 1898 charter, park, square, spring, and monument commissioners were abolished and their duties transferred to a Board of Park Commissioners. For this reason, the commission ceased to exist in 1898.

Records Summary

Only a single volume makes up this record group. Information provided by the material is limited to minutes of meetings held in 1874.

Series

1. Minutes. 1874. 1 lin. in. (1 vol.).
Arranged chronologically.

RG47 Department of Public Works (1924-74)

History

Many of the functions of the modern Department of Public Works date back to the early years of the municipal government. The Baltimore Town Commissioners (RG1, RG2), Baltimore's first government body, had responsibility for street extension and repair, sanitation, and water supply. After the Revolutionary War the explosive growth of the city led to government attempts to improve public services. The Board of Special Commissioners (RG1, RG2), created in 1782, had as its primary responsibility improvement of the streets. And when the state granted incorporated status to Baltimore in 1796, one of the first actions of the new municipal government was creation of the city commissioners (RG3). This office had responsibility for streets, sewers, bridges, and sanitation.

As Baltimore continued to grow during the nineteenth century, the municipality created separate agencies to deal with street cleaning, harbor improvement, building inspection, and water supply. Responsibilities overlapped between these agencies and the city commissioners. The overall efficiency of these related functions was, by the waning years of the century, clearly inhibited by the lack of a central administration.

In an effort to streamline and improve the efficiency of the entire municipal government, the 1898 city charter combined all city agencies into nine functional departments. One of these was a Department of Public Improvements, which assumed the powers of the city commissioners and all other agencies previously involved in public construction or maintenance. Sub-agencies of the new department were the city engineer, inspector of buildings, water board, and harbor board. Another reorganization of the municipal government led to the creation of the Department of Public Works in 1925. Responsibilities of this body extended over water supply, streets, mechanical-electrical services, street cleaning, surveys, public buildings, the harbor, transportation, and sewers.

The present administrative structure of the department was formed in 1968 through a charter amendment. Five functional bureaus were established, including engineering, consumer services, utility operations, inspection, and general services.

Records Summary

Record group 47 contains records associated with public works construction, maintenance, and improvement occurring after 1900. Older records are cataloged under agencies that were subsequently absorbed into the modern Department of Public Works, such as records of the city commissioners and Water Supply Records (RG25).

The records discussed here represent only a small portion of the material generated by activities related to public works. Subjects treated in the records cover contract execution; construction of streets, sewers, and public buildings; budget requests; urban planning and renewal; federal grants; water supplies; trash collection; and building inspection. Record types include correspondence, newspaper clippings, drawings, reports, and legal documents. There are some gaps in the material.

Series

1. Director's Correspondence. 1924-66. 129 reels of microfilm.
Arranged by year and thereunder by separate subject classification systems.
2. Newspaper Clipping Files. 1967-74. 10 cu. ft. (10 boxes).
Arranged chronologically.
3. City Engineer's Records. 1900-22. 1.0 lin. in. and 77 oversize drawings. Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.
4. Inspector of Buildings, Correspondence Received. 1920.
1 reel of microfilm. Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.
5. Sanitary Division Administrative Files. 1974-77.
0.9 cu. ft. (2 boxes). File folder listing.
Arranged by subject.
6. Bureau of Building Construction, Project Files. 1947-57.
41 reels of microfilm. File folder listing.
Arranged by specification date.

History

To provide its citizens with the opportunity for decent housing in an attractive environment has been an articulated goal of the municipal government since 1937. That year marked the creation of the Housing Authority of Baltimore City (HABC), which was concerned with providing adequate shelter for low-income residents. Continual expansion of the city's housing activities led to the creation of the Baltimore City Department of Housing and Community development (HCD) in 1968.

In the wake of the severe economic depression of the 1930s, the federal government enacted the Housing Act of 1937 to assist localities in providing adequate housing for their citizens. A subsequent state law passed the same year enabled Maryland cities and counties to take advantage of these federal funds. HABC owes its origins to this state legislation and is currently part of HCD, although HABC's state charter gives it a unique character.

Throughout the 1930s and early 1940s, the national housing policy emphasized publicly funded housing. Planners were beginning to see, however, that public housing alone would not solve housing problems if the growth of slums and blighted areas continued. This realization led to the concept of "redevelopment," which depended largely on slum clearance projects. In Baltimore slum clearance began in seven redevelopment areas devised by the Baltimore Redevelopment Commission (RG33). These areas were Waverly (area 1), Broadway (area 2), Shot Tower (area 4), Camden (area 7), and Mount Royal-Fremont (areas 9, 11, and 12).

By the early 1950s it was believed that slum clearance and public housing were not comprehensive enough to regenerate the city. The problem was that too much emphasis was placed on the physical aspects of housing at the expense of the urban environment such as streets, traffic patterns, zoning, schools, and parks. A coordinating committee made up of representatives of the redevelopment commission, Department of Public Works, the Health Department's Housing Bureau, HABC, the Department of Education, and Department of Recreation and Parks began to address this shortcoming in 1954. The National Housing Act of 1954 formalized this process begun in Baltimore and other cities. Passage of this act marked the beginning of the use of the term "urban renewal" to encompass a broad range of city activities.

In 1956 Mayor Theodore R. McKeldin appointed an urban renewal study board composed of national experts to study the progress of Baltimore's urban renewal. The board's report appeared in September 1956, and it recommended the combination of all urban renewal activities into one agency. This was quickly done with the creation of the Baltimore Urban Renewal and Housing Agency (BURHA) in the same year. BURHA was formed from the redevelopment commission, Housing Bureau of the Health Department, the area project office of the Welfare Department, and the neighborhood planning section of the Planning Department. The basic activities of BURHA were continuing slum clearance and supervising public housing, but it was also responsible for developing urban renewal plans, coordinating community involvement, and enforcing the housing code in the renewal areas. A new emphasis was placed on developing non-housing uses for the areas acquired through slum clearance. The three areas of concentration in the 1950s and 1960s were the Shot Tower Industrial Park (area 4), Camden Industrial Park (area 7), and the major commercial development, Charles Center.

During the 1950s and early 1960s urban renewal activities in Baltimore centered on slum clearance and new construction. However, a new philosophy of conservation and rehabilitation began to take hold by the mid-1960s. With most of the major clearance work done, city officials looked for ways to re-use the sound buildings that remained. This type of work required numerous building permits and zoning changes, activities monitored by the Bureau of Building Inspection (BBI) of the Department of Public Works. To expedite all aspects of housing policy, and also to rectify some abuses in BBI, the Mayor's Committee on the Administration of Code Enforcement recommended the formation of a comprehensive housing department. The municipality acted on this recommendation in 1968 by combining the functions of BURHA and BBI into HCD. This was the first time any city in the United States had combined all its housing functions into one department.

Records Summary

The Archives conducted a comprehensive records survey of HCD in 1981-82. All records deemed to be of historical value are described below, and have in most cases been transferred to the archives. As a result, the activities of HCD from about 1970 onward are comprehensively covered. While the period prior to 1970 is covered less thoroughly, HCD as a whole is still documented better than any other municipal agency.

The full range of HCD's (and its predecessor agency's) responsibilities is treated in varying detail by the records. Subjects dealt with at length are planning, building inspection, slum clearance, commercial revitalization, federal and state grants, public housing construction and management, general administration, and all facets of urban renewal. The most common record types are correspondence, minutes, reports, publications, land records, legal documents, and grant administration files.

The series descriptions below are grouped according to the department's administrative structure in the following manner: series 1, HABC; series 2, BURHA; series 3-7, commissioner and deputy commissioners; series 8-12D, neighborhood development division; series 13-14C, public housing management division; series 15-17, social work services division; series 18-20, homeownership development division; series 21-23D, administration division; series 24-32, planning division; series 33-36, program management division; series 37-37F, relocation division; series 38-41, land development division; series 42-43, commercial revitalization division; series 44-65, construction and buildings inspection division; and series 66-77, information services division.

Series

Housing Authority of Baltimore City

1. Minutes. 1937-present. 32 reels of microfilm.
Arranged chronologically.

Baltimore Urban Renewal and Housing Agency

2. Administrative Files, Development Department.
1945-68. 17 cu. ft. (33 boxes). File folder listing.
Arranged by subject.

Commissioner and Deputy Commissioners

3. Commissioner's Board of Estimates Files. 1972-73.
1.8 cu. ft. (4 boxes).
Arranged chronologically.
4. Commissioner's Signed Mail. 1969-78. 44 cu. ft.
(96 boxes).
Arranged chronologically.
5. Subject Files, Deputy Commissioner I. 1959-78.
9.45 cu. ft. (21 boxes). File folder listing.
Arranged by subject.
6. Subject Files, Deputy Commissioner II. 1977-78.
4.05 cu. ft. (9 boxes). File folder listing.
Arranged chronologically.
7. Subject Files, Deputy Commissioner III. 1972-present.
10 cu. ft.
Arranged by subject.

Neighborhood Development Division

- 8. Administrative Files. 1966-78. 16.2 cu. ft. (36 boxes).
File folder listing.
Arranged chronologically and thereunder by subject.
- 9. General Subject Files. 1969-present. 10 cu. ft.
Arranged by subject.
- 10. Housing Standards and Inspection Files. 4 cu. ft.
1967-present.
Arranged by subject.
- 11. Community Organization Files. 1962-76. 24 cu. ft.
(51 boxes). File folder listing.
Arranged chronologically.
- 11A. Hardship Program Case Files. 1975-78. 1.8 cu. ft.
(4 boxes). File folder listing.
Arranged alphabetically by street name.
- 12. Neighborhood Development Workable Programs. 1961-72.
4.2 cu. ft. (9 boxes). File folder listing.
Arranged chronologically.
- 12A. Correspondence and General Subject Files, Rehabilitation
Services, Neighborhood Development. 1978-present.
11 cu. ft.
Arranged by subject.
- 12B. Existing Land Use Maps. 1958-59. Approximately
200-300 maps.
Arranged by zoning district.
- 12C. Zoning Summary Cards. 1963-present. 5 cu. ft.
Arranged by street address.
- 12D. Photograph Files, Zoning Enforcement. 1963-68. 0.5 cu. ft.
Arranged by area.

Public Housing Management Division

- 13. General Files. 1942-77. 18.45 cu. ft. (41 boxes).
File folder listing.
Arranged by subject.
- 13A. General Files, Section 8 Program. 1975-present. 8 cu. ft.
Arranged by subject.
- 14. Housing Project Files. 1946-78. 23.85 cu. ft. (53 boxes).
File folder listing.
Arranged by project and thereunder by subject.

- 14A. Monthly Reports, Housing Application Office. 1948-present.
2 cu. ft.
Arranged chronologically.
- 14B. Memos, Directives, Bulletins, and Operating Orders.
1955-present. 3 cu. ft.
Arranged by type and chronologically thereunder.
- 14C. Management Records, Public Housing Projects. 1963-present.
144 cu. ft.
Arranged by housing project and thereunder by subject.

Social Work Services Division

- 15. Subject Files. 1959-76; bulk dates 1973-76. 6.3 cu. ft.
(14 boxes). File folder listing.
Arranged by subject.
- 16. Chronological Files. 1972-76. 2.7 cu. ft. (6 boxes).
Arranged chronologically.
- 17. Old Program Files. 1971-present. 2 cu. ft.
Arranged by program.

Homeownership Development Division

- 18. Chronological Files, Director's Office. 1971-present.
3 cu. ft.
Arranged chronologically.
- 19. Subject Files, Director's Office. 1972-present.
16 cu. ft.
Arranged by subject.
- 20. General Files, Otterbein and Barre Circle Homestead
Projects. 1975-present. 12 cu. ft.
Arranged by subject.

Administration Division

- 21. Closed-Out Urban Renewal Project Files. 1960-77.
9.9 cu. ft. (22 boxes). File folder listing.
Arranged alphabetically by project.
- 21A. Correspondence Files, Director's Office. 1963-81.
4.95 cu. ft. (11 boxes). File folder listing.
Arranged by subject.
- 21B. Studies and Analyses, Administrative Planning and Services.
1951-present. 4 cu. ft.
Arranged by subject.

- 22. Chronological Files, Budgets Unit. 1974-present. 6 cu. ft.
Arranged chronologically.
- 22A. Personnel and Salary Listings, Budgets Unit. 1971-74.
0.47 cu. ft. (1 box).
Arranged chronologically.
- 23. Administration, Finance, and Accounting, George B. Murphy
Homes, Parcel Folders. 1960-61. 5.9 cu. ft. (13 boxes).
File folder listing.
Arranged by street addresses.
- 23A. Comptroller's Subject Files. 1945-70. 7.35 cu. ft.
(3 boxes). File folder listing.
Arranged by subject.
- 23B. Housing Authority of Baltimore City Policy and Procedure
Files, Administrative Planning and Services. 1947-present.
2 cu. ft.
Arranged by subject.
- 23C. Comptroller's Chronological Files. 1963-67. 1.35 cu. ft.
(3 boxes).
Arranged chronologically.
- 23D. Comptroller's Project Files. 1945-72. 3.6 cu. ft.
(8 boxes). File folder listing.
Arranged by project number.

Planning Division

- 24. General Files. 1957-73. 9.9 cu. ft. (22 boxes).
File folder listing.
Arranged alphabetically.
- 25. Structural Surveys. 1957-67. 19.8 cu. ft. (44 boxes).
Block index.
Arranged by block numbers.
- 26. Building Condition Surveys. 1966-68. 12. 6 cu. ft.
Arranged by block numbers.
- 27. Harbor Study Files. 1958-65. 4.95 cu. ft. (11 boxes).
Block index.
Arranged by block number.
- 28. General Files, Research and Analysis Unit. 1948-present.
24 cu. ft.
Arranged by subject.
- 29. Maps, Research and Analysis Unit. 1950-present. 1 cu. ft.
Arranged by subject.

- 30. Studies, Research and Analysis Unit. 1959-present.
0.65 cu. ft. (1.5 boxes).
Arranged by subject.
- 31. Working Papers for Major or Long-Term Studies. 1975-78.
2 cu. ft. (2 boxes). File folder listing.
Arranged by study.
- 31A. Chronological Files. 1978-present. 6 cu. ft.
Arranged chronologically.
- 31B. Urban Renewal Plans Files. 1956-present. 2 cu. ft.
(2 boxes). File folder listing.
Arranged by urban renewal area.
- 31C. Development Programs, Public Housing Planning.
1952-present. 2 cu. ft.
Arranged by project.
- 32. Chronological Files, Program Management. 1978-79.
3 cu. ft. (3 boxes).
Arranged chronologically.

Program Management Division

- 33. Budget Control Committee Records. 1978-80. 0.45 cu. ft.
(1 box).
Arranged chronologically.
- 34. Project Area Files. 1978-present. 4 cu. ft. (9 boxes).
File folder listing.
Arranged alphabetically by project.
- 35. Community Development Block Grant Files. 1978-present.
0.45 cu. ft. (1 box). File folder listing.
Arranged by grant number.
- 36. Project Area Committee (PAC) Files. 1977-78. 0.45 cu. ft.
(1 box). File folder listing.
Arranged topically.

Relocation Division

- 37. Administrative File. 1964-72. 3.6 cu. ft. (8 boxes).
File folder listing.
Arranged alphabetically.
- 37A. Relocation Files, Director's Office. 1969-present.
8 cu. ft.
Arranged by subject.
- 37B. Reports, Director's Office. 1966-present. 4 cu. ft.
Arranged by division unit and thereunder by report type.

- 37C. Case Files, Residential Relocation. 1952-present.
274 cu. ft.
Arranged by project area and thereunder by street address.
- 37D. Case Files, Commercial Relocation Payments. 1965-present.
60 cu. ft.
Arranged by project area.
- 37E. Case Files, Differential Payments, Commercial Relocation.
1975-present. 6 cu. ft. Restricted.
Arranged by project.
- 37F. General Files, Business Relocation. 1961-present.
6 cu. ft.
Arranged by subject.

Land Development Division

- 38. General Files. 1956-72. 5.7 cu. ft. (9 boxes).
File folder listing.
Arranged alphabetically.
- 39. Settlement Folders. 1937-57. 18 cu. ft. (40 boxes).
Street index.
Arranged by street address.
- 40. Vacant House Program Real Estate Files. 1969-75.
6.75 cu. ft. (15 boxes). File folder listing.
Arranged alphabetically.
- 41. Design Advisory Panel. 1963-75. 2.2 cu. ft. (5 boxes).
File folder listing.
Arranged alphabetically and chronologically thereunder.

Commercial Revitalization

- 42. Chronological Files. 1976-present. 3 cu. ft.
Arranged chronologically.
- 43. General Files. 1973-present. 2.7 cu. ft.
File folder listing.
Arranged by subject.

Construction and Buildings Inspection Division

- 44. Correspondence Files. 1958-81. 8.1 cu. ft. (18 boxes).
Arranged by correspondence type.
- 45. Chronological Files. 1969-78. 19.35 cu. ft. (43 boxes).
Arranged chronologically.

46. Subject Files. 1964-74. 2.7 cu. ft. (6 boxes).
File folder listing.
Arranged by subject.
47. Property Files, Vacant House Program. 1964-76.
40.5 cu. ft. (90 boxes). File folder listing.
Arranged alphabetically within each project.
48. Engineering Correspondence Files. 1959-77. 8.10 cu. ft.
(18 boxes). File folder listing.
Arranged by project.
49. Structural Drawings of City Owned Buildings.
ca.1895 - ca.1960. 6 reels of microfilm. Building index.
Arranged alphabetically by building.
50. Structural Drawings. 1940-52. 11 reels of microfilm.
Building index.
Arranged by date of issue.
51. Registers of Public Franchises and Minor Privileges.
1878-present. 2 cu. ft.
Arranged by minor privilege number.
52. 1931 Building Survey. 1931. 49 reels of microfilm.
Street index.
53. Master Index Cards, Building Permits. 1924-61. 48 reels
of microfilm.
Arranged by block number.
54. Building Permits. 1920-61. 47 reels of microfilm.
Arranged by block number.
55. Building Permits, Numerical File. 1962-present. 224 reels
of microfilm.
Arranged by permit number.
56. Minor Privilege Index Cards. 1900-17. 8 reels of
microfilm.
Arranged alphabetically by street name.
57. Minor Privilege Applications. 1900-76. 60 reels of
microfilm.
Arranged chronologically by date of permit.
58. Minor Privilege Account Revision. 1917-72. 10 reels of
microfilm.
Arranged by permit number.
59. Block File (General File). 1924-61. 168 reels of
microfilm.
Arranged by ward, section, block, and lot numbers.

- 60. Razing Permits. 1963-present. 4 cu. ft.
Arranged chronologically and thereunder by street address.
- 61. Drawings and Plans, Public Housing Projects. Late 1930s-present. 16 reels of microfilm. File folder listing.
Arranged alphabetically by housing project.
- 62. Condemnation Files, Building Inspection. 1975-present.
3 cu. ft.
Arranged chronologically.
- 63. Property Files, Design Unit. 1980-present. 0.25 cu. ft.
Arranged alphabetically by address.
- 64. Demolition Contractor Files, Permits and Applications.
1970-present. 1.5 cu. ft.
Arranged alphabetically.
- 65. Chronological Files. Building Inspection. 1971-77.
4.05 cu. ft. (9 boxes).
Arranged chronologically.

Information Services Division

- 66. Division Files. 1966-present. 6 cu. ft.
Arranged by division.
- 67. Urban Renewal Areas and Project Files. 1973-present.
5 cu. ft.
Arranged by project area.
- 68. Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG) and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Files. 1978-present.
1 cu. ft.
Arranged alphabetically by development area.
- 69. Organizations Files. 1971-present. 1 cu. ft.
Arranged by organization.
- 70. Press Releases. 1970-present. 2 cu. ft.
Arranged chronologically.
- 71. City, State, and Federal Government Files. 1970-present.
2 cu. ft.
Arranged by level of government and thereunder by individual agency.
- 72. Chronological Files. 1964-74. 2.3 cu. ft. (5 boxes).
Arranged chronologically.
- 73. Photograph Files. 1955-present. 3 cu. ft.
Arranged by subject.

74. Slides. Late 1950s-present. 0.25 cu. ft.
Arranged by subject.
75. Newspaper Clipping Files. 1965-74. 32 cu. ft.
(68 boxes).
Arranged by subject.
76. Art Project Files. 1974-80. 2 cu. ft.
Arranged by project.
77. General Files. 1970-present. 5 cu. ft.
Arranged by subject.

RG49 City Hall Construction Records (1867-75)

History

A number of different buildings housed the municipal government prior to the Civil War. In 1867, the municipality determined that a permanent structure designed specifically for official needs was necessary and established a committee to oversee construction. The building's cornerstone was laid in October 1867, and work proceeded rapidly at first. But after charges of fraud were made against building committee members in 1868, the municipal government was compelled to cancel all previously awarded contracts. A new committee supervised the reawarding of contracts, but in 1869 it too was dissolved. A third and final committee directed the project from this point until the building's completion in 1875. Despite these administrative problems, the building actually cost \$225,000 less than anticipated and the architectural style was widely acclaimed.

In 1975, the city hall was temporarily vacated for a complete restoration. This work ended the following year and the structure continues to serve as the headquarters of the municipal government today.

Records Summary

The material in record group 49 relates almost entirely to the actual construction of city hall. As such, the range of subjects dealt with are narrow: solicitation and selection of bidders; payment of goods and services suppliers; and analysis of construction progress. Records types include correspondence, contracts, bonds, reports, bills, receipts, and financial accounts.

Series

1. City Hall Construction Records. 1867-75. 9 cu. ft.
(20 boxes). Index.
Arranged chronologically.
2. Ledger. 1869-75. 1 lin. in. (1 vol.).
Arranged chronologically.

RG50 Central Payroll Division (1930-75)

History

Until 1924, all municipal agencies handled their own payroll activities. In that year, Mayor Howard W. Jackson's Commission on Efficiency and Economy (RG52) recommended centralization of all payroll functions into one bureau. This suggestion was put into effect in 1925. Originally part of the comptroller's (RG43) office, the payroll function became part of the newly established Department of Finance in 1964. This arrangement exists today.

Records Summary

The Central Payroll Division records are limited in their scope. Almost all the pre-1954 material pertains to non-divisional activities of Director Elmer Bernhardt, including personal papers and materials generated through involvement with voluntary municipal activities. Post-1954 records relating to the division itself are limited mostly to employee requests to alter their payroll records.

Series

1. Administrative Files. 1930-75. 4 cu. ft. (9 boxes).
File folder listing.
Arranged chronologically.

RG51 Department of Recreation and Parks (1946-present)

History

In 1860, the municipality enacted a law requiring that all street car companies operating in the city pay a franchise tax on their receipts. Revenue generated from this tax was to be used to acquire and maintain park lands. To carry out the provisions of this law, the city in 1860 established a Board of Park Commissioners. Among the board's first acts was the purchase of Druid Hill Park.

In 1898, the commissioners were made part of the new Department of Public Parks and Squares. Two years later, the park board sponsored a concert band to perform in the parks during the summer, and in 1918 the municipality appointed a director of music to coordinate musical activities. Municipally funded recreational programs for children began in 1915, and in 1940 the city established a Department of Public Recreation. The 1946 city charter merged parks, recreation, and music into the present Department of Recreation and Parks.

Records Summary

This record group is limited to a series of scrapbooks maintained by the department. The material was collected to illustrate the program activities of the department, and the subjects covered include amateur and professional sports in the city; construction and use of Memorial Stadium; maintenance and use of public parks, pools, and golf courses; historic preservation; departmental personnel; and environmental issues associated with park lands. Entries consist exclusively of newspaper clippings, primarily from local papers.

Series

1. Scrapbooks. 1946-80. 5 lin. ft. (33 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.

RG52 Commission on Efficiency and Economy (1923-27)

History

Mayor Howard W. Jackson appointed the Commission on Efficiency and Economy in 1923 to survey the organization and operation of the city government. The commission's purpose was to introduce business methods into management of the city, to eliminate waste and useless jobs, and to streamline operation of the municipality.

The commission, composed of accountants, auditors, and cost experts from Baltimore's largest businesses, examined and analyzed every municipal office and made numerous recommendations concerning the efficiency and economy of the city's operation. Major changes brought about by the commission's recommendations included consolidation of individual agency payroll departments into a Central Payroll Bureau (RG50); creation of a Department of Public Works (RG47), a Bureau of Audits (RG61), a central purchasing and warehousing operation, and a retirement system; and preparation of the first complete inventory and evaluation of all city assets, including property.

William F. Broening, Jackson's successor as mayor, terminated the commission's activities in 1927. It was succeeded by the Commission on Governmental Efficiency and Economy, an independent organization incorporated in 1929 when the Baltimore Association of Commerce and the Real Estate Board of Baltimore became concerned with the need for a permanent, non-partisan organization to continue the analytical work of the original commission.

Records Summary

The Commission on Efficiency and Economy record group consists solely of material relating to an inventory of city property conducted in 1926-27. A collection of photographs and miscellaneous items (series 2) appears to cover most buildings owned by the municipality at that time. A set of inventories (series 1) contains written descriptions of buildings and other structures in Druid Hill Park.

Series

1. Inventories. 1926-27. 1.5 lin. in.
No arrangement internally. Groupings from the original binders have been maintained.
2. Photographs and miscellaneous items. 1926-27. 0.5 lin. in. (5 vols. and 1 folder).
Arranged topically. School photographs in order by school number.

RG53 Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals (1949-present)

History

The present Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals (BMZA) is an outgrowth of municipal concern with the problems of the city's development and expansion. In the two decades following the 1904 Baltimore fire, the municipal government became acutely aware of the adverse effects of the city's uncontrolled and unregulated growth. A zoning commission, created in 1921, represented the first attempt to solve this problem. The city council established the commission to divide the city into districts according to allowable building height and usage. Once this was accomplished and a draft ordinance prepared, the commission ceased to exist. In 1923, a Board of Zoning Appeals was established to rule on appeals of zoning decisions. However, this board and two others established between 1923 and 1925 were short-lived because the Maryland Courts of Appeal ruled that the municipality did not have the authority to enforce its zoning laws.

The state enacted a law in 1927 authorizing the mayor and city council to pass and enforce a zoning ordinance. In the same year the city council created a thirteen member zoning commission to again divide the city into zones and draft regulations. Four years later the city council passed Baltimore's first comprehensive zoning law based on the efforts of this commission. This ordinance re-established a five-member Board of Zoning Appeals with broader powers than the original board. This body was authorized to "study zoning, its development, application and relation to public and private municipal development... and submit amendments to this ordinance."

The next major change in the administration and regulation of zoning occurred in 1949 with establishment of the Department of Municipal and Zoning Appeals headed by the five-member BMZA. The BMZA assumed the functions and powers of the old Appeal Tax Court (RG5) and the Board of Zoning Appeals, both of which ceased to exist. The BMZA became the appellate body for zoning, tax, and condemnation appeals, and continues as such at the present time. The board hears and decides all pertinent appeals from the Department of Finance, Department of Public Works (RG47), state Department of Assessments, and other miscellaneous appeals.

Records Summary

These records are fairly complete and reflect much of the board's activities, as well as those of predecessor agencies. Topics dealt with include board meetings, appeals, zoning decisions, and legislation. Correspondence, minutes, reports, case files, drawings, and ordinances are present in significant amounts.

Note that only one series of the records described here is available at the archives. BMZA is required by law to maintain its records within its own office so as to make them available for public inspection. Only the older correspondence files (series 5) have been transferred to the archives. All other records here described may be examined by contacting the board.

Series

1. Minutes. 1930-present. 8 cu. ft.
Arranged chronologically.
2. Annual Reports, 1949-present. 0.25 cu. ft.
Arranged chronologically.
3. Zoning Appeal Case Files. 1931-present. 454 cu. ft.
Street index.
Arranged by year and thereunder by appeal number.
4. Ordinance Reports. 1923-present. 26 cu. ft.
Arranged by file number.
5. Correspondence Files. 1923-present. 20 cu. ft.
Arranged by subject.

RG54 Bureau of Accounting Operations (1832-present)

History

The duties of the present day Bureau of Accounting Operations were, until recently, handled by a variety of municipal agencies. The register (RG32), comptroller (RG43), auditor (RG6, RG61), and several temporary committees all at one time or another managed audits, disbursements, and other aspects of financial accounting. In 1964, a new municipal charter consolidated these responsibilities within the Bureau of Accounting Operations, which in turn was placed under the Department of Finance. Specifically, the bureau's duties have been to keep fixed asset records and inventories; prepare financial statements and reports; and maintain an accounting and bookkeeping system for all city agencies. This arrangement continues today.

Records Summary

This record group consists of an assortment of different records maintained by the bureau and predecessor agencies. Since the material came to the archives from the bureau, where it had been maintained since establishment of the office, it was decided to keep all the records together. Subjects treated include valuation of property and fixed assets; sewer and storm drain construction accounting; management of municipal funds, loans, and capital projects; and rental of conduit ducts. Record types are financial in nature and include ledgers, journals, accounts, inventories, and tabulations.

Series

1. Fixed Asset Records
 - A. Valuations of Property. 1925-39. 2 cu. ft. (4 vols.).
Arranged by Agency.
 - B. Fixed Asset Record Revisions. 1927-63. 0.25 cu. ft. (1 vol.).
Arranged alphabetically by agency.
 - C. Consolidations. 1931-72. 1 cu. ft. (4 vols.).
Arranged by agency.
2. Water Records
 - A. Sanitary Sewers. 1906-34. 0.5 cu. ft. (7 vols.).
Arranged by record type and chronologically thereunder.
 - B. Storm Drains. 1832-1934. 1.5 cu. ft. (20 vols.).
Arranged by type of record and thereunder by constructing agency.
 - C. Baltimore County Water and Electric Company Valuation Data. 1919. 0.25 cu. ft. (1 vol.).
Arranged by analytical category.

3. Capital Ledgers. 1932-65. 0.75 cu. ft. (3 vols.).
Arranged alphabetically by agency.
4. "11 x 11" Journals. 1932-71. 1.5 cu. ft. (8 vols.).
Arranged alphabetically by agency.
5. Plant Investment Ledgers. 1932-70. 1 cu. ft.
Arranged by municipal department.
6. Duct Rentals. 1900-41. 0.5 cu. ft. (4 vols.).
No arrangement.
7. Plant Distribution Ledgers. 1935-74. 5 cu. ft.
(19 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
8. Monthly Financial Statements. 1949-66. 2 cu. ft.
(4 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
9. Loan Ledgers. 1924-74. 10 cu. ft. (30 vols.).
Arranged by fund.
10. General Ledgers. 1943, 1945-52, 1955, 1967-78. 15 cu. ft.
(47 vols.).
Arranged chronologically by fiscal year.
11. General Ledger Master File. 1974-present. 0.5 cu. ft.
(2 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.

RG55 Passenger Arrival Records (1833-75)

History

A state law passed in 1833 required the captain of each vessel entering Baltimore to compile a list containing information about passengers on board. Captains were charged \$1.50 for each passenger recorded on these lists. This law was enacted because there was widespread concern that the massive numbers of immigrants then pouring into Baltimore would put a strain on funds of public charities. The head tax provided by this law was designed to generate revenue for immigrant charity needs and also to limit the emigration of paupers.

Starting in 1834 two-fifths of the tax income went to the German and Hibernian Societies for assistance to German and Irish immigrants, which composed the vast majority of those coming to Baltimore. After 1842 the remainder of the money went to the Trustees for the Poor of Baltimore City and County. This system ended around 1866 when the courts ruled that such taxes were unconstitutional.

The federal customs service collected identical information about foreign passengers arriving in Baltimore between 1820-1891. These "customs lists" contain the names of some persons not mentioned in the "city lists" and are available at the Maryland Historical Society and the National Archives.

Records Summary

The Passenger Arrival Records consist mostly of individual lists of names gathered by the captain of the transporting vessel (series 1). Provided for each passenger is name, age, sex, occupation, nationality, destination, last permanent residence, and name and date of entry of the vessel. The lists are incomplete for some periods, and available information is sometimes garbled or inaccurate. A name index to the lists is available, and it contains much of the same information as the lists. A separate volume provides general statistics for annual immigration activity (series 2).

Series

1. Passenger Arrival Lists. 1833-66. 15 cu. ft. Index.
Arranged chronologically by date of vessel arrival.
2. Passenger Ships Arriving in Port of Baltimore, 1833-75. 2 lin. in. (1 vol.).
Arranged chronologically.

RG56 Civil War Records (1861-67)

History

During the Civil War, the municipal government offered a series of bounties (cash payments to recruits or their dependents) to encourage enlistment in the Union armed forces. A bounty board, composed of the comptroller (RG42) and two mayoral appointees, administered the program under the authority of the register (RG32). The municipality also apparently paid for some military supplies, equipment, and troop wages, most likely for soldiers recruited in the city. The heaviest period of municipal activity seems to have been between 1862 and 1865; after the war's end, it took several years to settle all accounts.

Records Summary

Financial materials make up the bulk of this record group. Most of the records relate to payments for bounties, supplies, death benefits, and troop wages. Record types include correspondence, checks, requisitions, muster rolls, uniform bonds, applications, and discharges. While much of this material relates directly to municipal involvement in the Union war effort, some items appear to have no connection with the city government. This is especially true for a number of muster rolls and bounty applications.

The Civil War records are covered by the HRS name index. While the material is described as separate series, a single sequential arrangement by HRS numbers is used for all items. See RG32 for related items.

Series

1. Administrative Records. 1861-65. 0.45 cu. ft. (1 box). Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.
2. Uniform Bonds. 1862-63. 0.45 cu. ft. (1 box). Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.
3. Bounty Applications. 1862-67. 6.75 cu. ft. (15 boxes). Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.
4. Bounty Correspondence. 1862-67. 1.35 cu. ft. (3 boxes). Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.
5. Bounty payments. 1862, 1864, 1866. 0.45 cu. ft. (1 box). Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.
6. Enlistment Certificates. 1862-64, 1866. 0.90 cu. ft. (2 boxes). Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.
7. Muster Rolls. 1862-67. 1.80 cu. ft. (4 boxes). Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.
8. Discharges. 1864-67. 1.35 cu. ft. (3 boxes). Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.
9. Oaths of Lost Certificates. 1863. 2 lin. in. Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.
10. Railroad Passes. 1863. 2 lin. in. Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.
11. List of Bounty Payments. 1865. 0.5 lin. in. (1 vol.).
12. Death Benefit Claims. 1865-66. 4 lin. in. Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.
13. Power of Attorney Forms. 1865-67. 6 lin. in. Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.
14. Enlistment Identifications and Death Certificates. 1867. 0.25 lin. in. Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.

RG57 Enoch Pratt Free Library (1867-present)

History

Late in 1881, Enoch Pratt, a Baltimore merchant, financier, and philanthropist, began construction of the city's first free public library. In January of 1882, Pratt presented the library to the mayor and city council. Several months later, the state legislature incorporated the first board of trustees for the library and that same year the city's voters approved a library bond issue. Construction of the central library was completed in 1884.

The library opened to the public in 1886 along with four branches, for which Pratt had also donated funds. At the end of the first year, these five libraries had a total of 45,109 volumes on their shelves and 25,963 registered borrowers; circulation totalled 410,215. From these beginnings the library continued to grow and expand its services. This necessitated the construction of a new and larger central facility, completed in 1933 on the site of the original building, and the addition of branches throughout the city. At present, the extension division consists of thirty-two branches and a bookmobile service, which was inaugurated in 1949.

Records Summary

The archives conducted a comprehensive survey of the library's records in 1982. A significant amount of historical records were found, most of which date from about 1970 to the present. There are proportionally fewer records available before 1970, although several important groups of materials were identified. Subjects dealt with in the records include general administration, policy decisions, professional activities, grants, public relations, branches, budgets, financial accounting, library materials acquisition, and children's services. Record types include correspondence, legal documents, reports, clipping files, financial materials, and minutes.

At the time of this writing, all of the library's historical records remain in their offices of origin. This arrangement exists at the request of the library's administration.

Series

Sub-group 1. Board of Trustees

1. Minutes. 1883-present. 1 cu. ft. (8 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.

Sub-group 2. Director's Office

1. Letterbooks. 1884-1926. 4.5 cu. ft. (38 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
2. Reports of the Librarian. 1892-1902. 13 lin. in.
(1 vol.).
Arranged chronologically.

3. Directors' Office Files. 1886-present. 92.5 cu. ft.
Arranged topically within each administration.
4. Publications and Reports. 1887-present. 8 cu. ft.
Arranged by type of report or publication.

Sub-group 3. Assistant Director's Office

1. Assistant Director's Office Files. 1959-present.
12 cu. ft.
Arranged topically.

Sub-group 4. Senior Administrative Assistant

1. Office Files, Executive Assistant to the Director.
1931-79. 4 cu. ft.
Arranged topically.
2. Office Files, Senior Administrative Assistant. 1954-81.
4.5 cu. ft.
Arranged topically.
3. Staff Instruction and Statistical Manuals. 1938-65.
11 lin. in. (2 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.

Sub-group 5. Public Relations

1. Office Files. 1962-present. 7 cu. ft.
Arranged chronologically.
2. Discontinued Publications. 1886-1926. 1 cu. ft.
(49 vols.).
Arranged by type and chronologically thereunder.
3. Archival Copies of Publications. 1920s-present. 68 cu. ft.
Arranged by type of publication.
4. Correspondence Files, Printing and Publications.
1965-present. 2 cu. ft.
Arranged topically.
5. Publicity Scrapbooks. 1906-present. 8 cu. ft.
Arranged chronologically.
6. Official Photographs. 1947-present. 2 cu. ft.
Arranged chronologically.
7. Window Photographs and Item Lists. 1960-present.
1.5 cu. ft.
Arranged chronologically.
8. Slides. 1970s-present. 0.5 cu. ft.
Arranged chronologically.

Sub-group 6. Library Planning and Finance

1. Cash Books. 1883-1910. 11 lin. in. (2 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
2. Petty Cash Journals. 1885-1926. 11 lin. in. (9 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
3. Statements of Expenses. 1885-1926. 11 lin. in. (7 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
4. Cash Receipts Journals. 1886-1926. 14 lin. in. (2 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
5. Day Books. 1896-1925. 11 lin. in. (15 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
6. City Appropriation Account Ledgers. 1911-25. 1 cu. ft.
(11 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
7. Contracts, Drawings and Specifications. 1908-75.
13 cu. ft.
Arranged by branch.

Sub-group 7. Processing Division

1. Acquisition records. 1888-94. 12 lin. in. (1 vol.).
Arranged by accession number.
2. Office Files, Book Selection Room. 1947-81. 4 cu. ft.
Arranged topically.

Sub-group 8. Personnel Services

1. Personnel Files, Inactive, Individual Employees.
1923-present. 53.5 cu. ft.
Arranged alphabetically.

Sub-group 9. Circulation Control

1. Circulation Records. 1886-1931. 1 cu. ft. (14 vols.).
Arranged by branch and chronologically thereunder.
2. Court Case Records. 1969-present. 0.25 cu. ft.
Arranged chronologically.

Sub-group 10. Volunteer Services

1. Administrative Files. 1975-present. 1.5 cu. ft.
Arranged topically.

Sub-group 11. Adult Services

1. Office Files. 1938-present. 26 cu. ft.
Arranged topically.

Sub-group 12. Children's Services

1. **Administrative Files. 1927-present. 5.5 cu. ft.**
Arranged topically.
2. **Reports. 1929-present. 2.3 cu. ft.**
Arranged by type.
3. **Summer Reading Clubs and Activities Files. 1940-present.**
2 cu. ft.
Arranged chronologically.

Sub-group 13. Young Adult Services

1. **Administrative Files. 1937-present. 12 cu. ft.**
Arranged topically.
2. **Book Talks. 1940s-present. 2 cu. ft.**
Arranged alphabetically by title.

Sub-group 14. Chief of the Central Library

1. **Office Files. 1972-present. 6 cu. ft.**
Arranged topically.

Sub-group 15. Audio-Visual Department (Central Library)

1. **Archival Film Collection. 1920s-present. 10 cu. ft.**
Catalogued in order of receipt.

Sub-group 16. Fine Arts and Recreation Department (Central Library)

1. **Office Files. 1927-present. 5 cu. ft.**
Arranged topically.

Sub-group 17. Maryland Department.

1. **General Correspondence and Office Files. 1926-present.**
34 cu. ft.
Arranged alpha-topically.
2. **Dealers' List. c.1934-57. 1.25 cu. ft.**
Arranged alphabetically by author.

Sub-group 18. Extension Division

1. **Administrative Files, Office of Chief of the Extension Division. c.1951-present. 6 cu. ft.**
Arranged topically.
2. **Branch Files, Office of Chief of the Extension Division. 1935-present. 3 cu. ft.**
Arranged by branch number.
3. **Administrative Files, Region I Office. 1969-present.**
13 cu. ft.
Arranged topically.
4. **Branch Files, Region I Office. 1971-present. 3 cu. ft.**
Arranged by branch number.

5. Urban Services Program Files. 1965-81. 4.5 cu. ft.
Arranged topically.
6. Administrative Files, Bookmobile. 1947-present. 1 cu. ft.
Arranged topically.
7. Scrapbooks. 1946-65. 1 cu. ft. (3 vols.).
Arranged topically.

Sub-group 19. Enoch Pratt Free Library Training Class

1. Miscellaneous Records. 1928-48. 2 cu. ft.
Arranged topically.

Sub-group 20. Service Reports

1. Statistical Records. 1927-32. 4 cu. ft.
Arranged chronologically.

RG58 Street Improvement Records (1828-1924, 1953-74)

History

The original physical plan of Baltimore consisted of several streets laid out in a traditional grid pattern. As the town slowly expanded, streets were extended from the original grid. Acquisition of property for new streets was relatively easy because land was either publicly owned or worth very little. By the 1780s, however, Baltimore was growing very quickly and the process of street improvement became more complex. Dozens of streets had to be extended and many others required widening and straightening. These actions became increasingly more expensive and complex as privately owned property appreciated in value.

In 1783, the state government authorized the Baltimore Town Commissioners (RG1, RG2) to widen Hanover Lane when two-thirds of the property owners fronting the street agreed to divide the cost for the work. Money was to be collected through payments of benefits (the assessed increase in value of private property adjacent to the improved street) and a special tax levy. Damage costs (the value of private property condemned for public use) were credited to property owners against benefit charges. The process of carrying out benefit and damage assessments required the preparation of a plat detailing proposed improvements and display of a public notice of intent.

Basically the same procedure preceded every street improvement project in Baltimore for the next fifty years, except that a specially appointed team of assessors handled the job of benefit and damage assessment. The 1796 charter did not give the municipality condemnation power or the authority to levy benefit charges. Every type of street improvement requiring these actions still depended upon approval by the state.

In 1817, the state authorized the drawing of a plat (known as "Poppleton's Plat") of all existing Baltimore streets along with representation of any necessary street improvements. The municipality was empowered to execute any of the improvements noted on the plat, provided two-thirds of those who were to have property condemned for a project approved. In 1836, and again in 1839, the legislature transferred general condemnation power to the municipal government. To make the most of this authority, the municipality in 1841 created a Board of Commissioners for Opening Streets. This body was to perform all the duties associated with obtaining property for street improvements, including preparation of plats, public notifications, and assessment of benefits and damages.

An attempt to streamline the city's government led to the abolition of this board in 1861 and transfer of its responsibilities to the Appeal Tax Court (RG5). After five years, however, the board was re-established.

The work of the board greatly increased beginning in the 1880s, primarily because bond issues such as the "Five Million Loan" of 1882 and the "Six Million Loan" of 1892 provided large sums for street improvement. The 1888 annexation also expanded the number of streets requiring attention. From 1904 to 1907 the board devoted most of its efforts to acquiring property for widening streets in the area burned by the 1904 fire. During the 1920s, the agency's activities reached a zenith after the municipality acquired hundreds of new streets through the 1918 annexation.

No significant changes have been made regarding the process of improving streets during this century, but administrative responsibility for the process has changed. The 1946 city charter did away with the Board of Commissioners for Opening Streets and placed its duties in a Department of Assessments. In 1975, an authority over street properties was placed in the Department of Public Works (RG47), where it remains today.

Records Summary

Records for street improvement relate primarily to the legal process of acquiring property. A significant amount of detail is provided for each improvement project covered. Other topics described in the records are financial accounts, street planning, and the 1904 fire. Opening and closing streets books, minutes, permits, and legal documents are the most abundant record types.

Series

1. Opening and Closing Streets Books. 1828-1924, 1953-74. 115 lin. ft. (1113 vols.). Street name index. Arranged in rough chronological order.
2. Minutes. 1905-13. 1 lin. ft. (9 vols.). Arranged chronologically.

3. Permits for Opening Improved Paving. 1911-15. 6 lin. in. (3 vols.).
Arranged chronologically.
4. Ledger. 1884-93. 1 lin. in. (1 vol.).
Arranged chronologically.
5. Ordinances Relating to Street Openings and Closings. 1882-87. 1 lin. in. (1 vol.).
Arranged chronologically.
6. HRS Indexed Records. 1900-24. 2.7 cu. ft. (6 boxes).
Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.

RG59 State of Maryland Papers Pertaining to Baltimore City
(1812-1904)

History

The municipal government has always had close ties to the state government. Baltimore was officially established by the state in 1729, and during the early years the state controlled practically all aspects of the town's administration. Even after granting Baltimore incorporated status in 1796, the state retained control over municipal taxation, land acquisition, public improvements, and other functions. As the nineteenth century progressed, the municipality slowly gained authority over its own internal administration. Finally, in 1918, the state relinquished most of its remaining power over the city's operation by granting Baltimore a "home rule" charter.

Records Summary

The material comprising this record group relates primarily to the legal authority exercised over the municipality by the state government. Among the topics covered are legislative acts, requests for assistance, opening and closing streets, public improvements, taxation, and militia service. Record types include copies of legislation, correspondence, petitions, reports, and minutes.

Series

1. Maryland General Assembly Papers. 1812-1910. 1.80 cu. ft. (4 boxes). Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.
2. Maryland Militia Papers. 1818. 0.25 lin. in. Index.
Arranged sequentially by HRS assigned numbers.

RG60 Department of Planning (1932-present)

History

A survey project conducted by Thomas H. Poppleton from 1817 to 1822 was Baltimore's first formal planning activity. Poppleton prepared a map showing the location of existing and future streets, and this so-called "Poppleton's Plat" guided the physical development of Baltimore for several decades. In 1893, a Topographical Survey Commission began to survey the city with emphasis on the areas annexed in 1888. Many of the public improvements carried out in the annex were based on the commission's surveys. The Burnt District Commission (RG17), formed in 1904 after the major fire of that year, carried out the most extensive planning work to that point in Baltimore.

The immediate predecessor to the present municipal planning body was the Commission on City Plan, established in 1910. Chief among the Commission's duties was the development of plans for streets and other public improvements. After a flurry of activity, the commission's work ceased in 1925 when its duties, along with those of the city surveyor and Topographical Survey Commission, were merged into a Bureau of Plans and Surveys within the newly created Department of Public Works (RG47). In 1932, the municipality reactivated the Commission on City Plan, which in 1936 became the Department of Planning, headed by a Planning Commission.

As presently constituted, the Planning Department is responsible for preparing physical development plans, operating a capital development program, and reviewing land subdivision proposals.

Records Summary

Much of the materials that make up the planning department records at the archives are associated with activities of the agency since 1974. Material dating prior to 1974 is located at the University of Baltimore's Baltimore Regional Institutional Studies Center (BRISC). Within this constraint, however, the material covers most aspects of the department's work. Topics treated are urban renewal, transportation, industrial and residential development, neighborhood revitalization, recreation and parks, schools, land use, and all varieties of public improvement. Record forms include correspondence, minutes, newspaper clippings, maps, drawings, reports, and publications.

Series

1. General Administrative Files. 1974-present. 47.35 cu. ft. (99 boxes). File folder listing. Arranged alphabetically by topic.
2. Reader Files. 1974-79. 5 cu. ft. (5 boxes). Arranged chronologically.

3. Planning Commission. 1932-66. 4 reels of microfilm.
Arranged chronologically.
4. Subdivision and Development Plats. 1950s-77. 71 reels of microfilm.
Arranged by drawer and plat number (until 1964), and chronologically (after 1965).
5. Master Plans. 1940s-60s, 1971. 2 reels of microfilm.
Arranged by function.
6. Statistical Data Folio. 1939-60. 1 reel of microfilm.
Arranged topically.
7. Square Mile Sheets. 1962-64. 1 reel of microfilm.
Arranged by location.
8. Transportation Division Plans. 1930s, 1960s. 6 reels of microfilm.
9. Traffic Survey. 1967. 1 reel of microfilm.
Arranged by street corner.
10. Pictures. 1950s. 1 reel of microfilm.
Arranged alphabetically by title.
11. Park Blue Prints. N.d. 1 reel of microfilm.
Arranged by park.

RG61 Department of Audits (1959-present)

History

Initial responsibility for municipal auditing activities lay with the register (RG32). Mounting duties in this area compelled the establishment in 1852 of an auditor (RG6), an office that was responsible for auditing municipal tax collections. The following year, however, the auditor's duties were changed to tax collection only, and all auditing duties were transferred back to the register. Another administrative change occurred in 1857 with creation of the comptroller's office (RG43). The comptroller, along with other powers, acquired complete control over all auditing procedures. In 1898, the new city charter provided for the position of an audit clerk under the comptroller. The clerk assumed most of the comptroller's auditing duties.

In 1926, a municipal ordinance created a Bureau (later Department) of Audits to supervise the general accounting system of the city and also to oversee the accounts of agencies. Operating under the comptroller, the department's activities have remained consistent up to the present. The department's primary duties are to audit all municipal agencies (except those under the superintendence of the comptroller) at regular intervals and to provide or initiate special audits at the request of the Board of Estimates (RG5) or the comptroller.

Records Summary

This record group is limited in volume, but the materials included do cover most of the Department of Audit's responsibilities. Topics dealt with include budgets, special appropriations, contracts, auditing procedures, and allegations of fraud and financial misconduct. There are some gaps in the material. Record types are correspondence, reports, and financial accounts.

These records are unrelated to the nineteenth century auditor's office (RG6).

Series

1. Administrative Files. 1959-72. 4.95 cu. ft. (11 boxes). Arranged by year and thereunder alphabetically by subject.

Manuscript Collections

MS 1 New Marsh Wholesale Produce Market Authority Records (1955-75)

History

The New Marsh Wholesale Produce Market Authority was created in 1955 and lasted until 1975 when the market was moved to Jessup, Maryland and placed under the Greater Baltimore Consolidated Wholesale Food Market Authority. The origins of the New Marsh authority date from 1773 when the state government created the Centre Market, which consisted of a group of sheds running from Baltimore to Pratt Streets along Market Place. Centre was primarily a retail market until about 1870 when it also began to be utilized as a wholesale market. The market was destroyed by the Baltimore fire of 1904 and rebuilt by the city in 1905-07. It was renamed the Marsh Market in its new location on Pratt Street. By the 1930s, the market had reached its peak of prosperity by catering to the strengthening truck farming in the Baltimore area.

In 1955, the state published a report on Baltimore market conditions. The document stressed the importance of markets and urged that both the Marsh and Camden markets be relocated because of heavy traffic congestion. During the same year the state created the New Marsh Wholesale Produce Market Authority as an "instrumentality" of the mayor and city council with the powers "to acquire land for and to locate, build, alter, repair, maintain, own, and operate a wholesale produce market." The reason for creation of the authority was the need for the market's relocation. Accordingly the authority constructed a new market on Pulaski Highway in 1960. Another study in 1966 urged the organization of a wholesale market in the Baltimore-Washington corridor, and the state selected the authority as the best candidate to accomplish this. In 1967 the state established the Greater Baltimore Consolidated Wholesale Food Market Authority with the provision that the body absorb the New Marsh authority "at such time as the [new] market has reached such a state of completion that the tenants of the New Marsh Wholesale Produce Market Authority may move their business operations to the market." This was accomplished in late 1975.

Manuscript Summary

The records of the New Marsh Wholesale Produce Market Authority document the early development, construction, and design of the market on Pulaski Highway; yearly financial operation of the market; and its absorption by the Greater Baltimore Consolidated Wholesale Food Market Authority. Materials include correspondence, financial accounts, and reports. The file folder listing available at the archives reflects original file headings and order as received; these records obviously represent several separate administrative files that have been combined. Older records of the Centre Market may be found in the comptroller's records (RG42).

Although the authority was never part of the city government, the archives accepted the records in 1978 because the authority superseded the old city operated Marsh Market.

Series

1. New Marsh Wholesale Produce Market Authority Records.
1955-75. 4.05 cu. ft. (9 boxes). File folder listing.
Arranged by subject.

MS 2 Walter Ireland Dawkins Papers (1912-31)

History

Walter Ireland Dawkins was a judge of the Supreme Bench of Baltimore from 1911 to 1934. Dawkins was born in Leonardtown, Maryland on October 21, 1858, the son of Young Paran Dawkins, a St. Mary's County farmer, merchant, judge of the Orphan's Court, and member of the Board of County Commissioners. He received a B.S. in 1880 and M.A. in 1883 from St. John's College and practiced law briefly in St. Mary's County. Dawkins then moved to Chattanooga, Tennessee and returned to Baltimore City in 1887. In Baltimore he built up a solid law practice and was on several occasions considered as a potential mayoral candidate. He was defeated in the Democratic primary in 1906 for a berth on the supreme bench, but was appointed to the bench in 1911 to fill a vacant term. Later that year he was elected to a fifteen year term and re-elected in 1926. In 1928 the state extended his term six years past the normal retirement age of seventy. He retired in 1934 and died two years later. Dawkins was active in numerous local organizations and served one term as President of the Maryland State Bar Association.

Manuscript Summary

These materials consist of Dawkins' case notes, along with jury lists and newspaper clippings. The archives obtained the files sometime in the 1950s.

Series

1. Case Notes. 1912-31. 5 lin. ft. (41 vols.).
Arranged by document type and chronologically thereunder.

MS 3 "The Baltimore Monumental Subscription Book" (1815)

History

The Battle Monument (or Baltimore Monument) was constructed from 1815 to 1825 to serve as a memorial to the thirty-nine Baltimoreans who died in September 1814 defending the city against British attack. The Committee of Vigilance and Safety, a municipally sponsored group that had mobilized the city for defense, collected funds for the monument (see RG 22). The municipal government completed the monument when private collections were completely exhausted. The monument was the first American-made war memorial and was designed by the French architect Maximilian Godefroy. The monument also was selected for use in the municipal government's official seal in 1827 and official flag in 1915.

Manuscript Summary

The subscription book is a record of contributors to the Battle Monument Construction fund. Originally located in the Department of Legislative Reference Library, the book was transferred to the Archives in 1978. About fifteen hundred subscribers are noted in the volume.

Series

1. Subscription Book. 1815. 1 lin. in. (1 vol.).
Arranged by order of contribution.

MS 4 Bouldin Family Survey Records (1659-1880)

History

The Bouldin family consisted of a long line of engineers and surveyors dating back to mid-seventeenth century Maryland. Jehu Bouldin set up a surveying firm in Baltimore in 1790 that passed to his son, Alexander J. Bouldin, and grandson, Augustus Bouldin. The company ceased to operate in 1912 shortly after the death of Augustus. This surveying and engineering firm was often employed by the Baltimore municipal government in the nineteenth-century; for example Jehu Bouldin assisted Thomas Poppleton in 1817-22 in an important survey of the city.

Manuscript Summary

This collection contains survey records for Baltimore County and City that were compiled or collected by the Bouldin family. These records were in the possession of Augustus Bouldin's daughters according to a Baltimore Sun article from 1912 and were given to the municipal government at an unknown date.

A portion of the collection covers the years 1659-1832 and generally represents the work of the Baltimore County deputy surveyors. The land system in Maryland was formed in 1641 with the appointment of a surveyor general and, starting in 1661, the appointment of deputy surveyors for each county. Whether these records are complete copies of the work of the deputy surveyors or selected copies to facilitate the projects of the Bouldins is difficult to determine. Several of the volumes are clearly marked as being the work of Baltimore County surveyors William Smith, 1764-68; George G. Presbury, 1782-90; and Thomas Gist, 1790-1804.

The collection includes estate surveys done by the Bouldins, ca.1830-80, for residents of both Baltimore County and City. These records include copies of estate inventories, plats, and other legal documents. Also included are ejectment plats and certificates for property claims that Alexander and Augustus Bouldin researched along with a handwritten index to these plats. The remainder of the collection consists of papers relating to Mounteney's Neck and Todd's Range, 1782-1846. These materials include copies of deeds, leases, land grants, patents for land and record extracts, correspondence, and arbitration bonds.

Series

1. Survey Records. 1659-1880. 5 cu. ft. (11 boxes).
Arranged by record type.

MS 5 Baltimore Sesquicentennial Celebration Records (1880)

History

In October of 1880, the municipality held a week-long celebration to honor the 150th anniversary of Baltimore's founding. The city sponsored parades, lectures, and publications to commemorate the event. For some reason, however, the celebration was held one year later than the actual sesquicentennial anniversary.

Manuscript Summary

The materials in this collection relate to the involvement of the municipal government in the celebration and include printed rules, circulars, invitations, programs, tickets, and parade routes; examples of official stationery; a survey of hotels and residences for accommodations including names, addresses, rates, potential accommodation capacities, and miscellaneous comments; a manuscript list of persons who can accommodate clubs and bands; and a printed map of the city distributed by Phillips Brothers and Company.

Series

1. Baltimore Sesquicentennial Celebration Records. 1880.
.45 cu. ft. (1 box).
Arranged by record type.

MS 6 Mayor Joshua Vansant Memoirs (1880)

History

Joshua Vansant was born on December 31, 1803 in Millington, Kent County, Maryland. After living in Wilmington and Philadelphia, Vansant's family moved to Baltimore in 1818. Shortly after this move, Vansant began a successful business career as a hat maker. He first entered public life in 1836 when he was chosen by the Reform Party as an elector for the state senate. From that time until 1871, Vansant held many influential posts: 1839, port master; 1846, commissioner of finance; 1852, commissioner of public schools; 1853, congress of the United States; director of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad; and United States postmaster at Baltimore. From 1871 until 1875, Vansant served as mayor. Even after Vansant left the office of the mayor, he continued to be active in Baltimore politics. From 1876 until his death in 1884, he served as city comptroller.

Manuscript Summary

This short (51 page) autobiography offers an abbreviated account of Joshua Vansant's life, including a history of his family and of Vansant's early life, and a record of the offices he held.

Series

1. Memoirs. 1880. 1 lin. in. (1 vol.).

MS 7 Whetstone Point Land Sale Correspondence (1794-95)

History

The federal government purchased Whetstone Point in the 1780s to build Fort McHenry. Prior to this time, the land had been used for a variety of purposes, including a marine quarantine station and hospital.

Manuscript Summary

These five letters concern the acquisition of Whetstone Point by the United States government. Those involved are Oliver Wolcott from the federal treasury department, Robert Purviance, the city collector, and Alexander Furnival, the owner of the land. The transaction was done with bank drafts through the municipal government. Also contained on this reel of microfilm are two different copies of the "Star-Spangled Banner" released by different publishers (no dates).

Series

1. Correspondence. (1794-95). 1 reel of microfilm.
No arrangement.

MS 8 John W. Kratz Papers (1886-87, 1898)

History

There are few known details concerning Kratz. He apparently was a Baltimore City resident who owned the two structures treated in the collection.

Manuscript Summary

These items relate to John W. Kratz and include an 1898 letter from William F. Broening (later mayor of Baltimore, 1919-23 and 1927-31) concerning the disposition of the estate of Kratz's mother; and state and city tax bills for 1886 and 1887, along with municipal water rent bills for the same years pertaining to a three story brick house on Barre Street and a frame dwelling in the rear of Welcome Alley.

Series

1. Kratz Papers. 1886-87, 1898. 0.25 lin. in.
No arrangement.

MS 9 Joseph Robinson Book Auction Record (1842)

History

Robinson was born in Frederick, Maryland in 1787. He learned the printer's craft and moved to Baltimore around 1807. After running a printing business for several years, Robinson expanded his activities to include bookselling and operation of a circulating library. He also published a number of books for the Catholic Church and put out at least two serials: Robinson's Magazine in 1818 and The Monitor newspaper in 1857.

Judging from the nature of the bankruptcy auction record, Robinson apparently had some difficult financial times around 1842 and was compelled to liquidate his book stock. But he managed to continue earning money through printing, and by the late 1840s was again listed in the city directory as a bookseller.

During the War of 1812, Robinson held the rank of general in the local militia. He was also very active in the Maryland Masonic organization and served as Grand Master from 1842 until his death in 1863.

Manuscript Summary

The collection consists of a one volume listing of books owned by Robinson and sold in 1842 during bankruptcy proceedings. There is no record of when or how the archives acquired the volume. The volume consists of an item listing of 386 book titles sold on or about January 12, 1842. Entries for each title include sequence of sale, title of book, number of volumes, person buying, and price paid. A summary of incidental expenses, such as newspaper advertising, transportation of books, and auctioneer's commission, are also provided.

Series

1. Auction Record. 1842. 0.25 lin. in. (1 vol.).